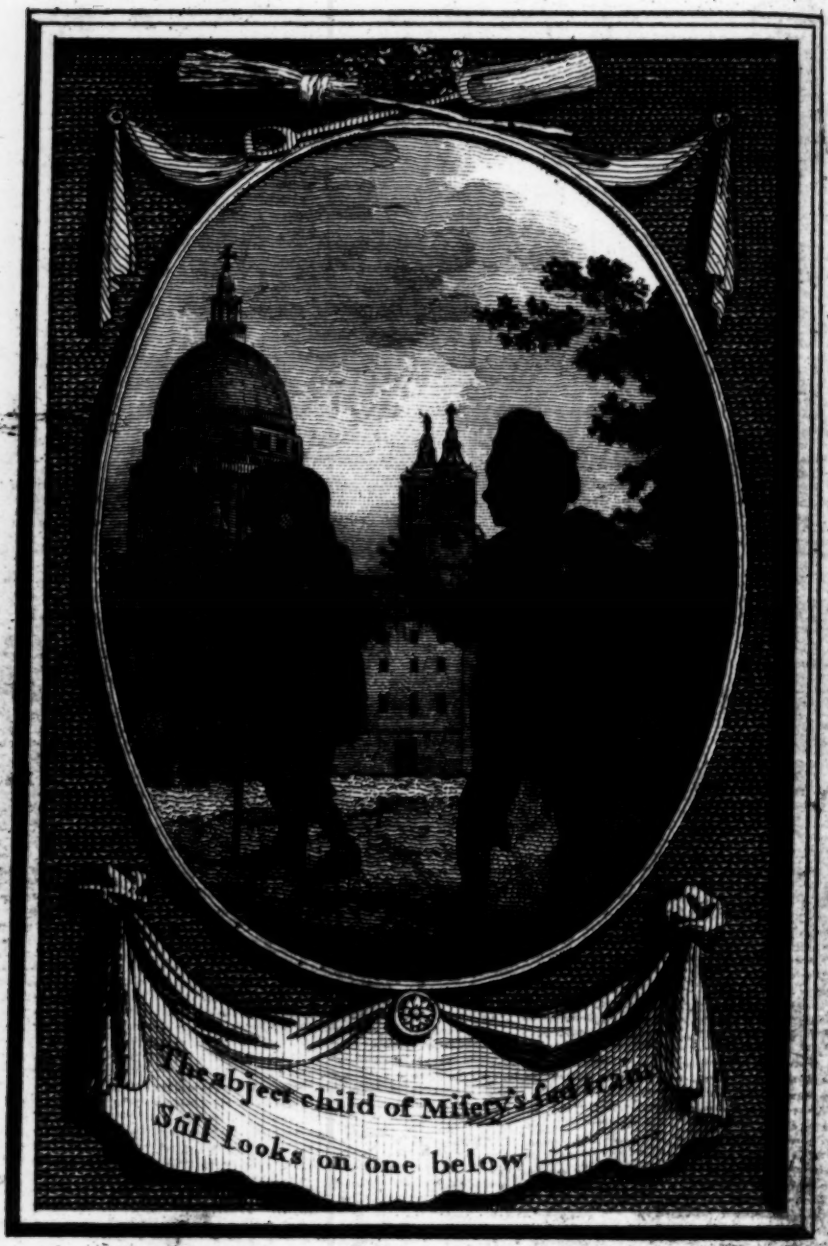
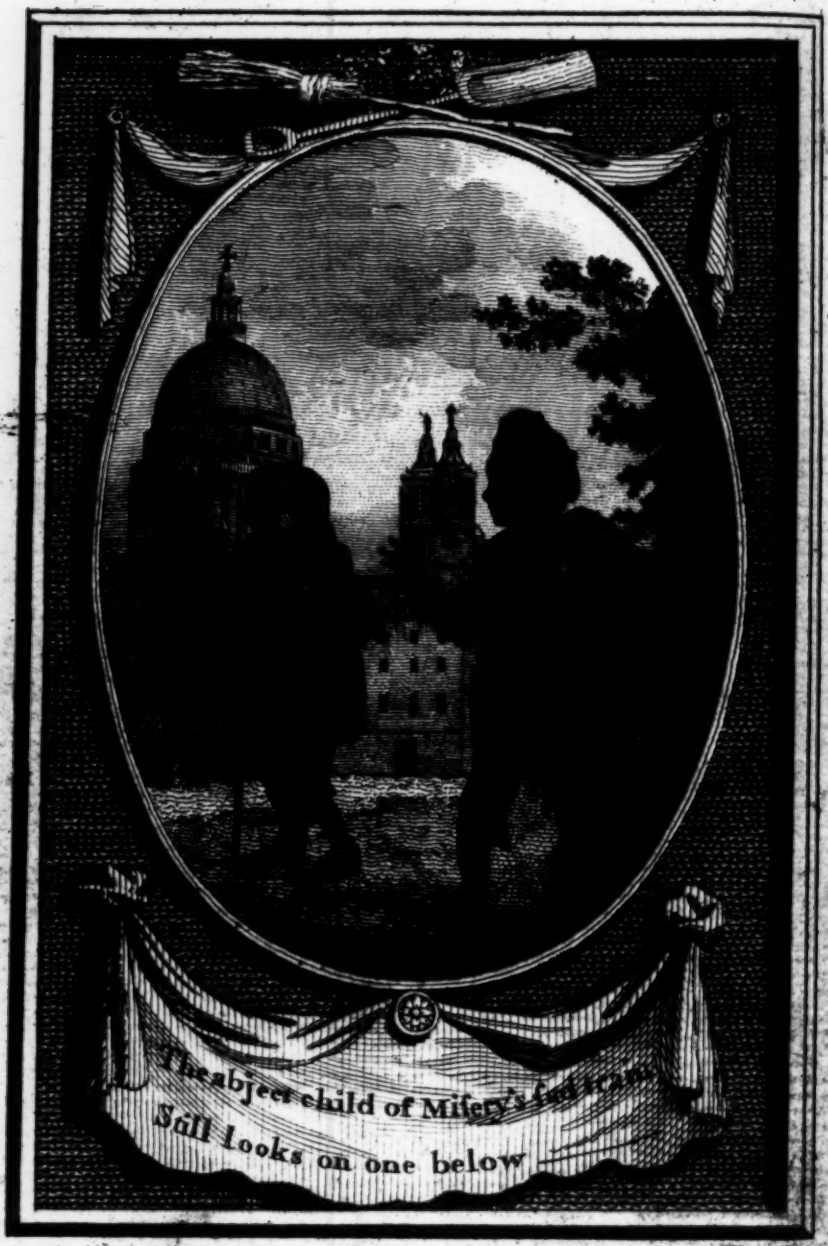

The abject child of Misery's sad train
Still looks on one below


The abject child of Misery's sad train
Still looks on one below

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A SENTIMENTAL HISTORY of Chimney Sweepers, in LONDON & WESTMINSTER.

SHEWING

The Neceſsity of putting them under Regulations, to prevent the groſsest Inhumanity to the Climbing Boys.

WITH

A Letter to a London Clergyman

ON SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

calculated for the preservation of the Children of the Poor.

By Jonas Hanway Esq.

Sold by Dodsley in Pall Mall, & Sewell in Cornhill.

1785.

Shepherd sculp.

TO

HUMANITY,

The Petition

of the Repreſentatives of Chimney-Sweepers Climbing-Boys,

Sheweth,

THAT your *reputation* in this land, renowned for your having many warm adherents, is in greater danger than "this immediate jewel of the "ſoul" ought to be expoſed to.

That the ſanction derived from your influence, has ever been eſteemed our choiceſt privilege, and coeval with your ſacred prerogatives:

That, through every link of the chain of moral cauſes, the coincidence of your properties gives the brighteſt luſtre to human actions; and where they are not regarded, the ſhades of miſery are diſplayed in gloomy horror.

That as man in his original conſtitution is framed to ſupport his fellow-creature, ſo in his leaſt impure and unadulterated ſtate, he is inclined to maintain that dignity and ſuperiority which he can never yield up, ſo long as his reaſon diſtinguiſhes him from the brute that periſhes.

That ſo much is dependant on *ſympathy* in the ſufferings of others, it is univerſally agreed, that man ceaſes to deſerve his exalted pre-eminence, as lord of this lower world, when he ceaſes to indulge that quality.

That the *living* waters, drawn from the great fountain of *mercy*, and all conſolation, animate his moral frame; and forming the primary laws of his intellectual nature, are the eſſential preſervatives of your attributes.

That Pity and *Compaſſion* are the neareſt relatives to your auguſt family, and that theſe join their pious

prayers

prayers and moſt tender wiſhes in behalf of your petitioners.

That Reaſon and Paſſion alſo mix their tears; they conceal not their ſorrows from your eyes; they blend their efforts; they are in nothing more cordial than in their devotion to your ſervice, comprehending their preſent application: and they truſt that their ſuit will not be treated with diſdain.

That you are the *cauſe*, and the inſtrument, of the divine properties and comforts of *charity*, ſo much influenced and dependant on your countenance, that when you are abſent, ſhe hides her face.

That your petitioners apprehend, that every duty of man to man comprehends a ſenſe of obedience to the Sovereign Creator and Governor; and upon this occaſion they conceive, that in ſoliciting your favour, and the exerciſe of your prerogatives, they contribute to the maintainance of your ſacred rights, and the preſervation of the glorious conſtitution, on which you depend; and by which all your votaries hold their deareſt property, never to renounce while they draw the vital air.

That they are indebted to you for a great part of that civilization which has promoted the trueſt know-

ledge of life and manners, religion being conſidered as both a guide and handmaid in your ſervice.

That your character has been ever held ſacred among men, from its correſpondence with the precepts of Chriſtianity, extended even to that divine mercy which the Chriſtian is required to obſerve and imitate; and this property becomes an effect of that cauſe which ſupports your intereſt in the moral world,—the powers veſted in *you*, as an inſtrument in the hands of the great Ruler of heaven and earth, promoting the order and harmony of the intellectual world!

That the heavenly features and graces of *mercy*, which mark their appearance in your conduct, like ſkilful lights and ſhades in the moſt beautiful portraits of nature, are ſo blended, that, like *twin-ſiſters* deſcended from heaven, the diſtinction can hardly be traced.

That while all the harbingers of almighty vengeance, ranged in their dreadful pomp, inſtruct offending man to avoid the evil of his ways, your attributes captivate him with the love of his duty, and he becomes obedient to his God, from the firſt principle and law of his nature!—For though "the vices and the virtues, the ignorance and knowledge, of men are

"ſubſer-

" ſubſervient to the unſearchable purpoſes of God," it was never known that a defect in your conduct was the ſubject of applauſe,—except among *Barbarians!*

That it is not a favourite object or two, ſuch as might be inadvertently expoſed to miſery, for which your petitioners intreat your attention, but a body of many hundreds, from year to year, through ſucceeding generations, who claim your protection on the great principle of a religious, as well as a political right, agreeable to the power and character veſted in you, as the guardian of the afflicted ſons of men!

That without your interpoſition, the ſaid objects will continue in a periſhing condition, no others of the human race ſtanding in ſuch need of relief: and, for the ſame reaſon, there will be a peculiar beauty and dignity in the exertions of your power in their favour.

That unleſs you ſupport your intereſt on this occaſion, your *petitioners* are apprehenſive, that ſo great a diſorder reigning under your ſovereignty, in one inſtance, your power of defence will be weakened, and the ſanctity of the principle by which your authority exiſts, ſtained with diſhonour; as the preſervation of ſuch principle can alone prevent a violation of that

pure ſyſtem; which, from the death of *righteous Abel* to this day, has been condemned by the united voice of all ages, in the civilized parts of the earth.

That your petitioners humbly beg, you will not ſuffer your faculties to be lulled by the faſcinating powers, or arbitrary mandates, of tyrannical *cuſtom*; nor your mental viſion to be obſtructed by the gloomy habit and attire in which they appear; for being clothed in miſery, they claim your protection ſo much the more, that they may not continue as the *forlorn hope* of human nature, and become victims, againſt every principle which Britiſh liberty and law are calculated to ſupport.

That if you ruminate on the expedients by which you may ſoften down the rigors of their ſad condition, you will perform the duty of a father and a friend to theſe afflicted children, whoſe only ſuccour can come from you!

That your petitioners apprehend, that in all commercial ſtates, induſtry is ſupported and countenanced; and they being very uſeful, and contributing to the ſafety and pleaſure of millions of fellow-creatures,

they

they claim a return of a decent comfortable ſupport of animal and intellectual life!

That if it be not practicable to put them on an equal footing with all thoſe who labour, at ſo tender an age; yet they truſt, by the kindneſs of that Providence, whoſe wiſdom is beyond the reach of mortals, they ſhall ſhare in the mercy and compaſſion diſplayed in all the works of God, where men, who are his inſtruments, do juſtice to each other!

Your petitioners, whoſe ſenſe of moral duty has moſt ſeriouſly engaged them as advocates in this ſuit, therefore humbly truſt that you alſo will become an advocate, and plead their cauſe inceſſantly, till they obtain ſuch relief as ſhall be deemed fit and proper, in the ſovereign diſpenſations of your power and influence amongſt men; and particularly the *legiſlators of theſe realms!* And your petitioners will always pray, *&c.*

Preface.

THE ruling motive to my writing theſe pages, was to recommend to my fellow-ſubjects, particularly the inhabitants of theſe vaſt cities, the exerciſe of their humanity towards thoſe who call the loudeſt for it, — Chimney Sweepers Climbing-Boys! I took up the ſubject many years ſince, more than once, and I gained many advocates; but we had not then ſkill or perſeverance enough to ſucceed.

If genuine freedom and ſound policy are congenial with the mercy which our religion requires; if theſe form a national character, and conſtitute the felicity of our country, it is not a little unfortunate for us to be thus thrown, in a great meaſure, out of the race of glory, by a chimney-ſweeper's climbing-boy; or in other

other words, by the reproach that follows, from the neglect of our common humanity towards him. To poſſeſs any powers of mind or fortune, and not to uſe them, is putting ourſelves in a worſe condition than if we poſſeſſed them not.

Every religion builds its hopes of rendering its votaries acceptable by the force of *charity*. However ſhort the *Mahometans* fall, they hold the principle in high eſtimation, extended even to the common rights of mankind. It was, at leaſt, confeſt to me, by a *Perſian Mullah*, "We hold *that* man as the moſt "virtuous who contents himſelf with *one woman*;" ſeeming to lean to the purity of Chriſtianity. Whether he alluded moſt to ſcience or morals, arts or politics, he added, "You have *two* eyes, we have but *one*." He had wit enough to diſcover, and candor to acknowledge, the great ſuperiority of the *Europeans* in knowledge, at the ſame time that he lamented my hard condition in not being *a true believer*. But if we ſhut our eyes, and do not diſcover our duty; if we ſteel our hearts to the impreſſions of humanity, the vaſt ſuperiority which the Chriſtian religion enjoys over that of my friend the *Mullah*'s, is equally againſt the natural effects of civilization. Thus we might

at

at length acquire a moral and political blindneſs, and give reaſon to the *Mahometan* to change his opinion. Our conduct towards theſe poor children, bears hard on our character.

Theſe pages have been preſented, for the day's entertainment, in ſeveral letters in the *Public Advertiſer*: They are now divided into eighteen, with conſiderable alterations and additions; and a Petition and Preface entirely new. The reward of my undertaking in this *ſooty*, not *dirty buſineſs*, conſiſts in ſtrong aſſurances, that my letters have made an impreſſion on many humane magiſtrates and other perſons, who, feeling a ſenſe of duty, will no longer be idle ſpectators of the miſeries deſcribed.

To lend a deaf ear to ſuch complaints, is ſurely not the way to ſoften our hearts to a right ſenſe of our condition, as beings accountable either to God or our country. The operations of the mind, in a cultivated ſocial ſtate, naturally incline it to mercy. If conſiderations of private convenience warp it; or purſuits of mere pleaſurable amuſement divert it from a ſenſe of duty, how will it be poſſible to aſſociate the ideas which form a moral or political, much leſs a *religious*, character?

The

The object before us offers itſelf providentially, as it were a *trial* what kind of ſenſibilities we retain; and whether our pretences to *liberty*, and unadulterated *religion*, are founded on a ſteady active principle, or the reſult of a habit of talking of them? If we apply our minds to ſuch objects only as cuſtom leads us to approve, becauſe they glitter in our eyes, pride will have a greater ſhare in our conduct than humility; and if this reigns in our breaſt, we ſhall render ourſelves literally the children of *darkneſs*. *Humility* only can bend the heart, and render *mercy* the companion of our boſom. This is eſſential to our religion as *Chriſtians*; and we are bound to examine what evidence we can give, ſatisfactory to our own minds, if the principle by which we are actuated is pure in the ſight of him,

" Who ſees with equal eye, as God of *all*,
" A hero periſh, or a ſparrow fall!

If this harmonizes with our affections, and genuine ſenſe of obedience to his laws, we may make an accidental *barbarous cuſtom*, adminiſter to a ſenſe of duty,

duty; and by a happy converſion of *evil* into good, become *gainers*. Attention to one duty leads us into the inveſtigation of others of a ſimilar kind; and we may owe to theſe poor children, the important obligation of learning to form our minds on a more perfect model of moral and Chriſtian virtues.

As an opulent *commercial* nation, eager in the purſuit of gain, and the gratifications which attend it, we are more ſubject to fall into inhuman or impolitic practices than one leſs affluent, depending more on ſtrict order and diſcipline. This makes our conduct leſs wonderful than lamentable; but when we depart from our duty, where is our character as a *great people*, and where our morals and religion as a wiſe and intelligent nation? The more one man enjoys, the more attentive he ſhould be to another who is ſuffering. This conſtitutes the aggregate of a wiſe or formidable nation; not to level conditions, yet diffuſe the common bounties of Heaven with a liberal hand. To oppreſs wantonly confounds all diſtinctions: it is praying to the common Father of all, to ſuccour thoſe who are in poverty or pain, or mourning under any affliction, and at the ſame time neglect

a moſt

a moſt obvious duty of *mercy*, and incur the additional guilt of mockery before Heaven!

Mercy is the attribute of the Deity, which we are moſt required to imitate; indeed the moral creation cannot ſubſiſt without it. Amidſt the various contending paſſions which ſo often tear the human breaſt, mercy is the property in which human nature appears arrayed in moſt ſplendor; and the more liberty a people enjoys, the more merciful they ſhould be! In proportion as we are inattentive to this high mark of *our calling* as *Chriſtians*, we loſe our way, and wander in darkneſs; we forget that we are *men*: we forget that everlaſting happineſs or miſery depends on our conduct in this great article of our religious faith and *obedience*.

What can afford the comfort for which the heart ſo naturally longs? It is *mercy* which inſpires *hope*, and gives the mind a reſting-place; and as it calms the turbulency of pride and falſe ambition, it checks the irregular appetites and deſires to which our animal nature inclines us: and we learn to give the trueſt teſt of obedience, in the high rank in which the Author of nature has placed us, *by ſhewing what man ſhould be to man!*

To be ſuperior to the pleaſures which intoxicate the fancy, or pervert the heart, is the only effectual means of acquiring that rational contempt of death, without which the life of man is apt to become a puerile ſcene, devoid of the nobleſt incentives to human actions!

If there is any thought which can tranſport or delight the heart, in the dread hour of parting with this ſcene, it muſt conſiſt in the hope of mercy, founded in *that which we have ſhewn* to fellow-creatures. And if this is the only way by which we can imitate the divine philanthropy of our mighty Prophet and Redeemer, who ſuffered a painful death for the ſervice of his country and mankind, his example, though in his divine nature it exceeds the utmoſt power of human thought, is ſo far imitable.

Miſery is invariably the lot of man, as the ſparks fly upwards; but the degree of it depends on his obedience to the laws of Heaven. If that obedience does not always render it light, in this world, it will furniſh a *more exceeding and eternal weight of glory* in the next; or the Chriſtian religion is a fabulous ſtory. And what could the infidel gain by being deficient in *mercy?* What delight could he feel in the miſeries of others? His nature would revolt; he would put himſelf

himſelf on a level with the moſt ferocious animal, diſqualifying himſelf for the ſociety of men. But, unleſs we apply diligently to exerciſe ourſelves in the duty of which we form ſuch exalted ideas, all is wanton declamation: and where ſhall we exerciſe our mercy, if the poor children in queſtion are treated as unworthy of our notice and regard?

If our mode of building has ſo leſſened the dimenſions of chimnies, as to make the ſervices of *ſuch young climbing-boys* neceſſary, it is an *evil*; it is an offence to humanity: *but* if we cannot *rebuild our houſes*, for the ſake of ſuch poor boys, we are bound by the ſtronger obligations, to *reform our* cuſtom of treating them, and *alleviate* their ſufferings!

The caſe is ſingular; for if we go no farther than *Scotland*, the chimney-ſweepers in Edinburgh are a part of the police of the city, under the controul of the magiſtrates. The number is fixed; and they are obliged every quarter to pay a certain ſum, for the benefit of ſuch of their community as may be ſick, or in want. They have a houſe of call, built at the expence of the city, and in the centre of it, adjoining the town-guard. Two of them watch every night in the guard-room, to be ready in caſe of fire. They are all

fire-*men*, and expert in extinguiſhing flames. The ſoot they collect is ſold for the common benefit of the whole fraternity. No boys are employed. When any chimney is required to be ſwept, two of theſe ſweepers attend, with a birch-beſom, ſimilar to that uſed by our oſtlers, a ſhort ladder, and a rope. One of them goes out at the garret-window, and ſecuring the ladder, mounts to the top of the chimney, whence the beſom is let down; and with the aſſiſtance of his companion below, they regularly ſweep clean every ſide of the chimney, in which they are very expert."

If this method cannot be purſued by us, let us at leaſt avoid ſuch practices as tend to deſtroy the lives of children, ſuch as forcing them up chimnies which are on fire; or to climb chimnies too ſtrait in their dimenſions. If to this we add a proviſion of good and ſufficient food and raiment, waſhing their perſons conſtantly, and providing fit beds and lodging; if we oblige the maſter to give his apprentices *inſtruction* ſuited to their infant-ſtate, we ſhall do no more than *common juſtice* requires at our hands; for we mean to pay him for it. If in either of theſe articles we are deficient, we do ſo much *leſs than juſtice* re-

 quires,

quires, and conſequently become criminal in the ſight of God!

The whole is compriſed in the compaſs I have mentioned; and if we obtain a law to be enacted on this principle, and ſhorten the ſervitude to *five* years, we ſhall diſcharge our duty.

We ſeem agreed in ſentiment, that the *preſent mode* is *diſgraceful*, as employing children to the danger of their limbs and lives; and we *ſuppoſe*, that "in this "enlightened age of mechanical ſkill, ſome ſimple "machine, on a plain conſtruction, may be deviſed, "at little coſt, to ſuperſede the continuance of ſuch "a baſe employment!" and ſo it may be, in ſome inſtances: at the ſame time, it is in vain to talk of the *age being enlightened*, while *the chimnies are darkened* by their narrowneſs, and their tops ſo covered with *earthen pots*. If any thing can be done to aboliſh our preſent cuſtom in ſweeping, it will be well; but there ſeems to be no proſpect of doing it, except in the degree that mercy, ſpreading her balmy wings, and ſoaring triumphant over all impediments, ſhall prevail. In the mean time, for the ſame cauſe, the more urgent are the reaſons for a humane treatment of theſe poor children.

children. What can we do further than prevent their being expoſed to violence, and as I have juſt mentioned, be careful that they be *fed* and *clothed*, *waſhed* and *lodged*, *as human creatures*, and with an attention ſuited to their tender age and uſefulneſs? If we ceaſe to employ children in this work, we muſt be at an additional expence in breaking tiles, and taking off and putting on the earthen chimney-tops: and whether our humanity will reach ſo far, is the queſtion.

In looking over ſome old collections of papers, I find a letter, written in or about Auguſt, 1760. It ſeems evident, that the common ſenſe and humanity of our fellow-ſubjects, with one common conſent, have been long ſince alarmed at the manner in which the poor children, chimney-ſweepers boys, are treated. *Ambulator*'s reſearch goes only to the lips of the wound; we muſt probe it before we can make a radical cure. My preſerving this paper proves, that if I did not write it, I thought upon the ſubject at the time.

" *For the* Public Advertiſer.

To the MAGISTRATES *of the Cities of* London *and* Weſtminſter.

Gentlemen,

THERE is in this capital an evil of a moſt crying nature, and which, in my humble opinion, is truly deſerving of your attention. What I allude to is the numbers of chimney-ſweepers boys that are to be met with in all parts of the town, without either ſhoe or ſtocking to their feet. It is to be concluded, that when their maſters took them from their reſpective pariſhes, they, in ſome form or other, bound themſelves to provide them with ſome kind of clothing, to defend them againſt the inclemency of the weather. If therefore you, Gentlemen, would give directions to the proper officers, that whenever they found a boy without proper covering for his nakedneſs, they ſhould enquire of him his maſter's name and place of abode, and ſummon him before you, in order that he might receive a puniſhment adequate to ſuch an offence, you would ſoon put an end to it, and at the ſame time do an act which would reflect honour on yourſelves,

give

give pleaſure to every perſon that has not loſt all ſenſe of feeling for the diſtreſſes of his fellow-creatures, and fulfil the will of our Lord and Maſter, who has ſaid, "Even ſo it is not the will of your Heavenly Father "that one of theſe little ones ſhould periſh.

I am,

Gentlemen,

Your very obedient ſervant,

Aug. 1760.

AMBULATOR."

Though I have given reaſons for apprenticing theſe children ſo early as the age of *eight*, that they may finiſh their ſeven years ſervitude at *fifteen*; upon maturer thought, *I apprehend we ſhould give ſtronger proofs of our humanity, if the age is limited to ten years, and the ſervitude confined to five years only; as they will then be ſet free at the ſame age of fifteen; and if they ſhould not continue in the ſame employment, as growing too big for climbing-boys, they may be placed out apprentices to any other ſervice.* This œconomy would be a very conſiderable relief of this diſtreſsful occupation, and afford great ſuccour to our national humanity, ſo

much wounded by the cruel neceſſity we appear to be under, of employing ſuch young perſons in ſuch a hard duty; and this regulation, with the others which I have recommended, would give the object a new face, and leſs terrific aſpect.

In this deciſion, I hope we ſhall have but one opinion; and that every ſubject who wears a heart in his breaſt, will join in ſoliciting the magiſtrates of theſe vaſt cities, to perform the office of ſuch, in a manner becoming men, and agreeable to their character and dignity! But this does not appear practicable in any manner ſo eaſy, as by forming the chimney-ſweepers into a political fraternity, amenable to our laws.

One of the faireſt and moſt honourable occaſions is now preſented to us of exerciſing our humanity, and at the ſame time ſhewing a reſpect for the character of our nation. As we cheriſh this propenſity, we prepare our boſoms for the reception of *Chriſtian charity*; without which the glories of immortality, promiſed by the goſpel, are removed from our ſight!

Whether it reſpects the poor boys who ſweep chimnies, or any other diſtreſſed children who wander in darkneſs, if *we* mean to preſerve our country, the ob-

ject

ject is of a ſerious nature. It is not a *theoretical* ſyſtem of refined morals, but a plan for immediate practice, replete with that mercy to others which we are anxious to receive ourſelves at the hands of God. Nothing can harmonize more with the pure religion which we profeſs; nothing ſo reducible to practice can recommend it in ſtronger terms. The actual devotion of our care and attention to ſuch objects is *charity*; and it is only under her tuition that we can learn fortitude and perſeverance, founded in a belief and confidence in the promiſes of a God of infinite mercy! We believe, that without charity, our offerings at his throne cannot be grateful. We muſt keep the mind bent, and ready for its proper aim, in order to give it reſolution to propoſe what is right, and underſtanding to perform it; and thus we may at length bring our labour to an iſſue, the moſt forunate that the heart can long for, and the moſt glorious which the ſoul can aſpire at accompliſhing.

Such are the fruits which we may gather in the delightful walks of nature, and of nature's God, to render us illuſtrious inſtruments in his hands in promoting our own happineſs, the preſervation of the *needy*, and the common good and welfare of our country!

If motives of this kind do not fire our minds; if they do not create ſuch well-diſciplined generous emotions of heart as will ſet us in *action*, in a noble and upright cauſe, it may afford juſt grounds for apprehenſion, that our confidence in the word of God is weak and confuſed; that our dependance on the Supreme intelligent Governor of the world, who is *light* and *truth*, is overſhadowed with *darkneſs*; and that we love *darkneſs* and *falſehood* more than we love light and truth!

Let us hope for the beſt, and hoping be in earneſt; and, by a habit of loving truth, keep ourſelves in earneſt. It is by conſtant thought, and daily recollection *whoſe we are*, that our purſuits can be rendered worthy the nobility of our nature, as free, intelligent, informed, accountable agents, preferring thoſe things which bear the ſtamp of moral excellency, and the ſubſtantial ſervice of our fellow-creatures. *For whom, in our ſocial nature, were we born?* If we make our election of the luſts of the eye, and the vanity and pride of life, we may be ſure of being loſt and bewildered by the falſe lights held out, and brought into a labyrinth of confuſion! Nor can it be for the love of virtue in the abſtract, or for what the

tongue

tongue may utter, or the pen preſcribe; it is ſurely for what *we do*, in obedience to the will of the Supreme Legiſlator, our Friend, our Father, and our God! For this, and this only, acting on a right principle, we may hope for happineſs. Let us be wiſe, and ſeek our own good! Being armed with faith in him, we may march forward with equal chearfulneſs and reſolution, truſting in a happy iſſue to the toilſome warfare of life. In this diſpoſition we may hope, with our lateſt breath, to expreſs our joy, in the aſſurance that He who rules over all, is infinitely good and merciful, and will not reject the *obedient*, the *humble*, and the *ſincere of heart!*

Attention to the religion of *Chriſt* neceſſarily renders the mind brave, reſolved, and quiet; not by any ſervility, but a principle of calm benevolence and love of human kind, ſuch as is eſſential to genuine freedom. Let a man recollect that he is really a *Chriſtian*, and he will feel in his boſom a faithful monitor to curb his paſſions and appetites, and hold them by the reins of reaſon. He will both awe and ſoothe himſelf into obedience, to the fundamental principle of his religion, which bears ſuch ſtamps of a

divine

divine origin: this is charity, which in our faith is the bond, the ſolid knot, which unites peace, and all the virtues of the ſoul, and conſequently is the true ſource of human happineſs. It is by the emanation of this divine ſpirit that man ſympathiſes in the joys and ſorrows of others, and "hides not himſelf "from his own fleſh:" he aſpires at the imitation of the Univerſal Benefactor, who alone is perfect in goodneſs; and, by this faculty, he acquires the greateſt degree of moral perfection which he is capable of. We can exerciſe this divine property only towards man, our fellow-creature; but it comprehends our relation to God. As founded in *faith*, it will generate *hope*, and therefore ſtand as a repreſentative of all the righteouſneſs man is capable of!

The unequal diſtribution of the bounties of Heaven, among other cauſes which the wiſdom of the Creator has apparently ordained, furniſhes the means of exerciſing the virtue on which our own felicity, as well as the happineſs of others, depends. If *charity* extends to the relief of every kind of ſuffering of body and mind, it takes in the chimney-ſweeping ſooty-boy and the miſerable negroe-ſlave, the ignorant poor child,

child,—and the ſinner of every claſs! It is the badge of a Chriſtian, and he is known "by loving the Lord his God with all his heart, and his neighbour as himſelf." Happy were it for the earth, if the inhabitants were all *Chriſtians*: if they underſtood their duty as ſuch, and the precarious tenure of their preſent ſtate, when "they fell, they would find a ſtay." "He who deviſeth liberal things, by liberal things "ſhall ſtand." That which promiſes faireſt to engage the love of man on true principles, will ſurely render him alſo a favourite of Heaven!

If our final ſentence, at the laſt day, depends on our *charity*, the wiſe will think of it while their hour laſts, not as a collateral conſideration, but their firſt object. "Lay up thy treaſure according to the "commandment of the Moſt High, and it ſhall bring "thee more profit than gold: it ſhall fight for thee "againſt thine enemies better than a mighty ſhield "and ſtrong ſpear." This, I preſume, relates to both worlds; and for theſe admonitions we have authorities replete with the wiſdom of ages, nature confirming them with the cleareſt voice!

Though mankind are left very much to their own

choice of objects, as their ſpiritual or temporal abilities may be, the preſervation of poor children, by inſtructing them in the ways of eternal life, "*is* "*in effect feeding the hungry, and cloathing the* "*naked with a garment.*" This ſtands in eaſe and relief of our moral, and of many of our political wants: it provides for generations to come, and promotes the welfare of our country, now weeping over the iniquity of her children. So far as we can trace the evil to its ſource, we may diſcover that the indolence and diſſipation, of many of us who move in a ſphere above the common level, have contributed largely. To us then it belongs ſo much the more to deprecate the vengeance of Heaven; and while we are watchful for the ſafety of our own ſouls, ſeek the means of preſerving others.

If to be a *Chriſtian*, in the trueſt ſenſe, is to live like a rational and accountable being, in order to die full of hopes of the glories of that immortality which his faith in Chriſt has promiſed, nothing which the world can give can exalt him higher; and nothing which it can take away can deprive him of that *hope*. This is his ſupreme felicity; this

conſtitutes the ſum and ſubſtance of all his ſpeculations, in the employment and event of every hour! — *Do good*, and thou ſhalt give comfort to thine own ſoul, and look on life and death indifferently! —

The reader will obſerve, that I have given this volume the name of a *Sentimental Hiſtory of Chimney-Sweepers*,—and ſo it is; for though many appeals are made to *facts*, yet there are but few of the long catalogue which might be produced. It is enough to ſay, that this miſerable occupation, calls for all the relief which can be afforded, to prevent cruelty, and the waſting of the human ſpecies by a wantonneſs of inattention. Let any one examine into the merits of the cauſe: With all the laborious efforts which theſe boys make for a ſupport, their bruiſed bodies, weakened eyes, frequent wounds, lungs ſtuffed, unwaſhen, unclothed, uncomfortable lodging, and ſcanty diet irregularly ſupplied, indeed conſtitute a Sentimental Hiſtory, equal to any of the miſeries which human nature ſeems capable of ſupporting; and how this could be connived at, in any country profeſſing the loweſt degree of civilization, whatever religion it might be of, would be truly wonderful: but in a country profeſſing Chriſtianity in its utmoſt purity, and liberty

in

in its moſt uncorrupted ſtate, is yet more wonderful! and if the evil is ſuffered to reign any longer, it muſt level us with nations whom we call Barbarians, if it does not ultimately draw on us the vengeance of Heaven! The magiſtrate and the legiſlator, clergy and laity, ſovereign and ſubject, all in their reſpective ſtations, are called on, as it were by a voice from Heaven, to ſuccour theſe poor children. Farewell!

J. H.

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N. B. It has been remarked on Art. 21, page 114, that the fault is not in the chimney-sweepers not being sufficiently paid for their work. On this opinion I must observe, that if we consider what the nature of the work is, and what evils the poor climbing-boys are exposed to, we may conclude, that it is not sufficiently paid for. With all the care which can be taken of them, their health will be much exposed. Many other occupations expose the health of men; but they are free agents; and being arrived at the maturity of their reason, they do what they please: and we shall find that their demand for their work generally bears a proportion to the risk which attends it. Several expences, now totally disregarded, are

 necessary

neceſſary for the preſervation of theſe boys; and common decency and humanity require that they be made. If an additional pay is made, whether by *cuſtom* or *law*, it will render the obligation to maſters to take due care of the boys ſo much the ſtronger. If the other conditions propoſed are enforced by law, the neceſſary expence *muſt* be made; and it ſhould be underſtood that it will be paid by the employer.

If no additional price for ſweeping is paid, it is difficult to conceive that any amendment, in this miſerable buſineſs, will take place. If we ſuppoſe two hundred and forty thouſand chimnies in one hundred and twenty thouſand houſes to pay ſixpence per common chimney more than formerly, it amounts to ſix thouſand pounds; divided on ſix hundred boys is ten pounds each.

If we reckon the miſery which reigns among the other branches of this black family; if ſo much money ſhould be *actually* paid to the maſters, as will allow of five pounds for the ſervice of each boy, the work may be accompliſhed: and if we do not hold out rewards as well as puniſhments, we depart from the fundamental principles of ſound policy.

LETTER

LETTER I.

Invitation to magiſtrates on moral, religious, and political principles, to conſider the ſtate of Chimney-Sweepers Apprentices.

To the Right Honourable the LORD MAYOR of London, and the MAGISTRATES of London and Weſtminſter.

My Lord and Gentlemen,

MY days growing very ſhort, I am the more impelled by a ſenſe of duty to God and my country, to plead the cauſe of the helpleſs who fall more immediately under my eye. You will eaſily conceive that I have no intereſt to ſerve, farther than is common to men who believe there is a God, and a ſtate of rewards for *good*, and puniſhments for *evil* deeds. If I were not actuated by any ſuch principle, compaſſion might operate in favour of the diſtreſſed, ſo

emphatically miſerable as the objects of my enquiry ſeems to be.

The cauſe which I recommend to you, is not of a nature to brook delay: the calm hour of peace, though perhaps not yet the calmeſt that may be hoped for, affords time for reflexion, and the exerciſe of the mercy which ſhould flow from it. Though there are objects of greater national concern in your province, as magiſtrates; none can be more intereſting to the heart, nor fall more within the circle of your protection. For my own part, I think it a duty, as a mark of my reſpect for you as magiſtrates, to communicate the reſult of my reſearches, perſuaded as I am, that if you follow the impulſe of your own good minds, you will attend to *this ſuit*, and judge the cauſe of the diſtreſſed with candour, reſolution, and juſtice. Though it goes to no higher a claſs of the people than *chimney-ſweepers, their ſervants and apprentices*, it is not leſs the cauſe of liberty and humanity.

I con-

I conſider you as the guardians of our police: how far this is generally unhinged and neglected, is a melancholy conſideration, but not irremediable. Providence has appointed you, in your reſpective diſtricts, whether in war or peace, to be watchful of the common rights of the ſubject: If any of theſe are abuſed and inſulted, to whom does it ſo properly belong to take cognizance, as to you?

We are taught to be vigilant, for that the devil, like a roaring lion, ſeeks whom he can devour. And what can give a ſtronger proof of our evil propenſities, than the havock of morals which we ſee before our eyes, and the ſad conſequences which attend it. And if ſo much evil is apparent, how much more may we ſuppoſe lurking ſecretly in the heart, from the higheſt to the loweſt ſubjects, though the latter may carry with them the moſt terror in the effects of their conduct, and the looſe and turbulent manner in which we have long ſuffered them to take their range: we have cheriſhed and promoted their iniqui-

ties, for want of proper priſon room for their confinement, inſtruction, and correction!

In the purſuit of my preſent attempt, I beg your leave to aſk, what can give a ſtronger mark of the purity of our belief in the religion of *Chriſt*, than the exerciſe of the *charity* which it ſo ſtrongly inculcates? The moſt exalted proof we can give, to our own hearts, is *obedience*, and the *humility* which attends it; and our charity in the eſtimate of the condition of other men. Though every object around us gives us leſſons, ſome are more ſtriking than others.—And we muſt examine our ſeveral duties by detail, or how are we to perform them? There is one duty unequivocal, with regard to the merits of its object: it is *man*, *man in an infant ſtate*; *man in diſtreſs*, not through vice; not through idleneſs; but where the induſtrious demand attention on account of their tender age under ſevere labour.

What feature of the moral countenance is more deformed, than that which is indolently uncharitable, except that which is actively

actively cruel? The notoriety of any ſuffering, on the part of a particular claſs of the people, does not leſſen that ſuffering, nor the obligation of individuals to relieve it. On my part, I take up the cauſe in this ſpontaneous manner; on yours the obligation is ſtronger, becauſe you hold the *ſword*, and are veſted with authority. It becomes a more immediate duty to you; as you might execute, what I labour to repreſent, and for which I can only plead and perſuade.

The ſame principle which might induce you to be active in one cauſe, would lead you alſo to be active in another. Devoting a larger portion of your time to thoſe offices of philanthropy, on which your chief glory as magiſtrates depends, you will perform your duty in that capacity, not only avoiding the imputation of bearing the ſword in vain, as to this world, but prepare us, by your example, for ſcenes of immortal felicity!

To ſuppoſe that you need ſuch intimations, might argue a want of reſpect on my

part; but ſo long as I ſee the poor objects in queſtion abandoned, as the forlorn hope of human nature, and no arm extended to ſuccour them, I muſt conclude that manly philoſophy, the liberal ſcience of humanity, ſo graceful to our nature, and the exalted precepts of our religion, are not, in every inſtance, *duly* attended to. Such principles open to the mind a ſcene of action, as far ſuperior to modern refinements in voluptuous gratifications, as virtue has ſuperior charms and ſuperior *hopes* to vice!—And how are men to prove *whoſe they are*, and what are the ſentiments which they adopt, unleſs they apply to the ſcience and practice of the duties which belong to their nature, in the ſtate which the great Author of it has placed them? With all the brilliant lights of chriſtianity around us, the beautiful ſimplicity of our religion will never captivate our hearts, unleſs we practiſe what we preach. Moral and pious obligations are ſo interwoven, that the neglect of either, endangers the baſis on which we ſtand or fall for ever!

We ought to reflect, that the ſervile office *impoſed* on theſe ſons of miſery, does not render them the leſs rational nor accountable: if they are the greater objects of compaſſion, from being put into ſuch a condition, the ſympathy of the human heart ought not to be the leſs. Had ſuch objects preſt forward, in true humility and ſimplicity of mind, for the benediction of our bleſſed Lord, would he not have rebuked his diſciples had they forbidden them to approach him, as if ſoot had defiled them? There are many reaſons why they ſhould be kept clean by waſhing; but not one for rejecting them, becauſe we *impoſe* ſuch ſevere ſervitude. Still it might be ſaid, ſo long as childhood keeps them from being polluted by ſin, "*of ſuch is the kingdom of* "*heaven!*" If in the view of humanity they are objects of commiſeration; and religion claims them as entitled to her *mercy*: if they are under the protection of the great Lord of all, who ſees the whole œconomy of life with an equal eye, we are fallen, deeply fallen indeed, if we do not ſympathize in their ſufferings!

We are ſuppoſed to be penetrated with conviction, that our religion carries with it the ſtrongeſt evidence of its divine original, by the mercy comprehended in it from God to man, and from man to his fellow-creature; inſomuch that we may *hope*, that with real charity, founded in faith, no man will be damned; but may it not be *feared*, that no man without ſuch charity will be ſaved?

That the immorality of the people, particularly of the lower claſſes, is arrived to a monſtrous degree of turpitude, is a ſad truth: it is dangerous: it is alarming: it operates againſt charity in the degree that confounds all order. Many cauſes may be aſſigned, but the chief is the want of diſcipline, and the neglect of the means of keeping men in awe, rendering thoſe, who have evil propenſities, ſo much the worſe, by our not inſtructing them either in the fear of God, obedience to parents, reſpect to maſters and ſuperiors, or a right underſtanding of their obligations to the community.

As to the boys in queſtion, very few of them are taught any thing: but we

may

may flatter ourſelves that a period of more juſtice is at hand. Mr. *Raikes*, a gentleman of Glouceſter, has lately eſtabliſhed what are called *Sunday Schools*, that, inſtead of permitting children to loiter in idleneſs, ignorance, and vice, as young chimney-ſweepers do with us, the pooreſt kind of children are collected and taught their duty, and attend the worſhip of God. The example has ſpread over Yorkſhire, Lancaſhire, and other counties, and promiſes the moſt happy effects. It is from ſuch ſimple and obvious ſources, we are to expect the ſtream will flow pure, and the laws of our religion become the guide of our youth. The higher orders muſt be alſo more religiouſly educated, or they will become only the more refined in ignorance of their religion; or by a contempt of it, rendered the more dangerous to the common peace.

In order to maintain your authority, ſo neceſſary to our well-being, you mean to puniſh doers of wrong, and will you not relieve thoſe to whom wrong is done? If the offence were only againſt the ſpirit of

our religion, your power might not reach ſo far: if it is through the defect of law, your reputation, and conſequently your authority, is concerned, to ſolicit for ſuch relief as is competent to the exigency of the caſe, in behalf of thoſe whoſe miſery deprives them of the means of complaint. The very condition of human nature, in an infant ſtate, requires this attention; and ſo far as *information* goes, I take up the cauſe, preſuming that you will examine into facts: if you believe there is a foundation for complaint, you cannot avoid it.

I recommend the object to your very ſerious conſideration: it appears to me that our neglect is a groſs departure from our character as a humane people; a deviation from common mercy, reſpecting our religion; and a ſcandal with regard to our *police*. If we wiſh to become conſiderate, and make our duties our pleaſure, it is high time to begin; and riſing from the bed of inglorious eaſe, ſummons all our ſtrength of reaſon, and piety of heart, to do that which is acceptable in the ſight of Him, on whoſe

favour

favour we depend for our exiſtence as a people. I have preferred this method of application (*a*), in the flattering expectation that many others, knowing as much as myſelf, may be induced to ſtep forth, and be aiding and aſſiſting in bringing this matter to a fair trial. I am, with great reſpect,

My Lord and Gentlemen,

Your moſt humble,

and obedient ſervant,

Red Lion Square,
March 8, 1785.

JONAS HANWAY.

(*a*) Alludes to the news-paper publication.

LETTER

LETTER II.

The juſtice due to every claſs of the people, on the common principles of mutual protection.

My Lord and Gentlemen,

IT is a propoſition ſelf-evident in this land, that if the firſt peer of the realm were to murder a chimney-ſweeper's boy, the laws would condemn him to death: he would die by the hand of the executioner. If ſuch boy were found to be entitled to a large fortune, the guardians of the laws of our country, would give it him without regard to the abject ſtate of miſery in which he might be. By parity of reaſon, are not theſe boys entitled to ſuch care and humanity as are neceſſary to their preſervation as human creatures, on the common principles of our national juſtice and œconomy?

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In the comprehenſive view of diſtributive juſtice, are we not guilty of groſs ingratitude? Theſe boys really earn *comfortable* bread, in return for the ſubſtantial ſervice which they do us; but is it given them? Their ſervice is attended with great toil and danger; and it is as neceſſary that our chimneys ſhould be ſwept, as that our pots ſhould boil: we generally think ſo; and why ſhould ſuch ſubjects be put to ſuch hard duty, and in return receive the hardeſt, I might ſay, the moſt cruel treatment? To be neither inſtructed in the rudiments of the religion of their country, nor properly fed nor clothed, not regularly waſhed, nor lodged in comfort, as neceſſary to the preſervation of their lives, is ſurely very hard treatment!

Good policy demands attention in favour of the uſeful and induſtrious; and for thoſe who are in a helpleſs ſtate, unable to judge and act in a proper manner for their own preſervation, humanity requires ſo much the more at our hands! Let every one conſider ſeriouſly, the portion of good deeds on which

which his happy immortality may depend! What is all the pride and pomp of life, about which ſuch a pother is made, compared with deeds of mercy and kindneſs to fellow-creatures? Without this, what is life? It is a fooliſh kind of play-thing; and the longer it laſts, the heavier the account of its folly!

In a well-regulated free community, every child is as much an object of the protection of the ſtate as the adult; but what adult *ſubmits*, much leſs *contracts* for ſuch treatment as is ſhewn to theſe poor children? Self-preſervation, the firſt law in nature, revolts againſt it. And what ſubject, upon a ſerious view of his own conduct, can reconcile to himſelf the being an idle ſpectator of any neglect or ill uſage, which threatens his neighbour's life? As to you who are magiſtrates, you are bound, by your *office*, to be attentive: you are emanations of the ſupreme magiſtrate, juſtly ſtiled *ſalus populorum*, not of any particular part, but of the *whole* maſs of the people.

I might

I might carry this reaſoning further, but I flatter myſelf you will give this cauſe a ſincere and attentive hearing, without procraſtination. You will find it as honourable to yourſelves, as beneficial to others, and a diſtinguiſhing mark of your zeal for real liberty, and the rights of fellow-ſubjects.

It is a daring queſtion, but I will venture to aſk: Is it known that any nation or people under the ſun, though living in a ſtate of uncultivated nature, that their children, in ſo young a ſtage of life, are of ſuch eminent ſervice to them, as chimney-ſweepers boys are to *us?*—Are they put on any ſuch hard duty?—Are they treated, in any comparative view, with ſo little humanity? There may be ſome who roaſt their children for food, but they certainly kill them firſt; they are not tortured with fire and foot, hunger and thirſt, cold and nakedneſs, and lodging of the ſame quality.—If you apprehend what I advance *to be true*, you will be ſo juſt to yourſelves as to give it a ſerious hearing.

I am, &c.

J. H.

LETTER III.

The hard condition of Chimney-Sweepers Apprentices.

My Lord and Gentlemen,

IF we look on and ſee an evil deed committed without reſentment, do we not render ourſelves acceſſaries; and with the lights which we enjoy, *what man ſhould be to man*, are we not, in the face of heaven, *criminals?* And for what? becauſe our voluptuouſneſs renders us indolent, and we depart from our character as a humane people? It is not to ſave ſixpences in the ſweeping our chimnies once in a year, for which our nation hazards its character; yet the evil is daily preſented before the eyes of hundreds of thouſands of witneſſes, who behold theſe poor boys in our ſtreets and highways. Perhaps it is becauſe the fact is ſo notorious, and the evidence ſo ſtrong, that the cauſe has

has been laid aſide, as admitting of no diſpute, where no witneſſes need be called for; and where no fees are expected, voluntary pleadings are rarely offered! It is every one's cauſe, therefore no one need bluſh to ſtand forth as an advocate. I have followed a few of theſe poor children into the habitations of their miſery; and though there are ſome exceptions, I have in general ſeen what the evil conſiſts in, and how the remedy might be provided.

It is one eſſential duty in your province, to ſee, that in matters of *police* within your ſeveral juriſdictions, no violence ſhall be committed, or neglect ſuffered to endanger the lives of ſubjects. There is enough of that with infants at the breaſt, or we ſhould not ſee, of 16,000 annually born, 8,000 die under two years of age, great part of them expiring by bad air, penury, and viciouſneſs of parents.

That a degree of miſery is inſeparable from human nature, is indiſputable; and it is not leſs true, that one part of the ſpecies, from ignorance or depravity, ſeems

to ſubmit as if it were eligible. But that which flows from untaught infancy, as the caſe before us demonſtrates, joined to the perverſeneſs of thoſe maſters under whom it is ſuffered, becomes the object of ſuch officers as Providence has placed in a higher ſphere, and particularly *magiſtrates*. Theſe poor children, though born to the drudgery of life, as human beings, and as ſubjects, are entitled to certain privileges, which cannot be withheld from them without a manifeſt violation of the juſtice due to human nature, as well as to the ſpirit of our laws reſpecting the poor

To alleviate miſery, or keep men from deſtroying or diſtreſſing each other, is the great object of all government. Liberty is but a ſocial tye, by the inſtrumentality of law. If theſe children are the offſpring of the pooreſt people, the greater their poverty, the ſtronger their claim to protection in common rights: the principles of charity and generoſity, ſupported by juſtice, enforce the plea. Is it any reaſon for being paſſive, that we are accuſtomed to ſee theſe children

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in their miſery? It is indeed more familiar than to behold a dog, which by his manner of running gives proof that he is ſeeking his maſter whom he has loſt: we compaſſionate the condition of the poor animal; ſhall we place theſe forlorn children in a degree below? Cuſtom cannot change the nature of offences, in his ſight who pervades all nature, and challenges man for omitting what is right, as well as for doing what is wrong.

Why ſhould it be thought impracticable to eſtabliſh a fraternity of chimney-ſweepers, on principles of equity, good order, and the means of preſerving theſe poor children? It may coſt us ſomething the more; but it can be no object, in the great view of the enquiry, as I ſhall make appear. I preſume you cannot accompliſh the work without the aid of parliament; but if you do not take the lead, and ſhew a noble and generous example in ſo material a part of our *police*, what are we to expect from any private individual? If an act of the legiſlature is neceſſary, and not ſought by ma-

giſtrates whoſe office it is to protect the people, it may be aſked for what end is the enſign of authority put into their hands? It may be urged, that they have many things of greater moment to think of; but is this a reaſon why juſtice ſhould not be done? Their office comprehends the whole. If it is an object that requires the exerciſe of juſtice and humanity, in one of the moſt tender concerns, the preſervation of the lives of poor diſtreſt boys, and the defence of them from the moſt cruel kind of oppreſſion, it is ſurely an intereſting object to magiſtrates! If habit and cuſtom, unawed by any human law, have authoriſed a ſpecies of barbarity of manners among us, hardly to be paralleled in any other country, it is high time to correct the abuſe!

I am, &c.

J. H.

LETTER

LETTER IV.

The unjuſt treatment, and hard condition of the generality of Chimney-Sweepers Apprentices.

My Lord and Gentlemen,

IN all large and opulent cities, the centre of arts and commerce, and the ſeat of government, we find a great mixture of poverty and miſery: it is particularly ſo in this metropolis. Some ſeek their bread improvidently, and with falſe hopes of ſucceſs: Some are idle and vicious, and *intend* to prey on their neighbour; but the greater number ſuffer for want of due care. What numbers of us ſpend our days in fooliſh or voluptuous purſuits, forgetting the duties which our fortunes call on us to perform in behalf of the indigent, and thoſe who

depend on labour for bread. It is thus the order of Providence is neglected, and the ſocial line broken; the only ſecure bond becomes cancelled, and the event is a ſcene of wretchedneſs which confounds the very idea of civil polity and union. The example operates, and the negligence of one in his proper ſphere, occaſions the offence of another. Thievery becomes familiar; that which is not obtained by labour, is ſought by rapine. Of this our ſtreets and highways, our houſes, our priſons, and courts of juſtice, afford the moſt melancholy teſtimony, and cry aloud againſt us!

In the mean while, the poor objects which I now recommend to your particular care and protection, are generally in a miſerable condition, without any guilt of their own, unleſs it be ſuch as is taught them by the diſſolute practices, or groſs negligences of their maſters. The ſituation of the great majority of the chimney-ſweepers boys would be very hard, were there no evil attending their calling, beyond that which unavoidably ariſes from the nature

nature of it, for it is generally acknowledged to be more than human nature can well bear; but when in addition to it, we conſider what they ſuffer by the ferocious ignorance of one maſter, the griping penury of another, the avarice of a third, and the obduracy to which a general cuſtom gives a ſanction, we may with great propriety ſay, that humanity is injured; her great principles are violated, and ſhe is conſtrained to cry aloud for redreſs.

The maſter chimney-ſweeper who has made the trial, is beſt qualified to relate his ſufferings during his childhood, the difficulties and dangers he went through in climbing, ſurrounded by ſoot, in the narrow paſſage of a chimney: but it does not appear that all the maſters have been regularly bred to the trade; or if they have, that they feel the more on this account.

It is beyond diſpute, that no employment in civil life, exerciſed by perſons of ſo tender an age, is learned with ſo much pain and difficulty. By the force of threats and promiſes, a boy may be initiated into

the myſteries of his calling, and taught how to climb through the ardent ſteps and ſooty paths of a chimney; but this does not mend the conditions of his ſervitude. What theſe promiſes may be, and how they are fulfilled, is more eaſy to conceive than deſcribe!

How the maſters obtain theſe children, would be myſterious, were it not known that numbers of the leaſt virtuous, or moſt neceſſitous among the labouring poor, part with their children at any rate. I have not heard, of late years, of more than one pariſh within the bills of mortality, where parochial officers place out their children to chimney-ſweepers; and I am not ſure that this continues the practice, notwithſtanding the occupation is ſo neceſſary to the community; and that the children of the public are ſuppoſed to be the moſt proper to be devoted to ſuch kind of drudgery. This we may preſume ariſes from the maſter's conduct, being ſo often reprehenſible, as well as from the nature of the buſineſs; the difficulties of which not having been alleviated as they might be.

Orphans,

Orphans, who are in a vagabond ſtate, or the illegitimate children of the pooreſt kind of people, are ſaid to be ſold; that is, their ſervice for ſeven years is diſpoſed of for twenty or thirty ſhillings; being a ſmaller price than the value of a *terrier*: but it is preſumed that the children of poor parents, who cannot find bread for a numerous family, make up by much the greater part of the number of the *climbing boys*.

Theſe poor children begin their toilſome journey of life, at ſo early a ſtage as five to eight years old, differing in quality and exertion of infant ſtrength, from all the other various employments which arts and commerce, the *neceſſaries* or the *ornaments* of life, have introduced. The lower and more abject it is, the leſs diſciplined we find the teachers who direct it. The inferior claſs of maſter chimney-ſweepers, who riſe no higher than *inmates*, living in cellars or garrets, are ſaid to be as thoughtleſs an order of the people, as the generality of our common ſeamen, not having the generous

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regard for others, as ſeamen for the moſt part have. What then can be the fate of ſuch children, where, by the paſſive ſilence of the laws, maſters are permitted to take apprentices *without limitation of number?* The number of apprentices to weavers in *Spital-fields* is confined, becauſe they ſhall not expoſe young perſons to poverty; and we indulge chimney-ſweepers, who take children at a much earlier age, without regard to their number, or their miſery. This is a capital inconſiſtency.

If the boy is under a maſter who has conſtant, regular employment, as ſoon as his *morning's walk* is done, he is generally ſent to ſeek for further buſineſs, or, as they term it, *to call the ſtreets*. Many ſuch maſters allow their boys to come home to their meals; though they ſhould give them no other relief.

Some maſters live by *caſual buſineſs only*, or depend on letting out their apprentices for hire to other chimney-ſweepers. Theſe are the leaſt diſciplined; and taking apprentices without limitation of number, render the ſituation of them the more deplorable.

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We may figure to ourſelves, the boy called from the bag of ſoot on which he ſlept, oftentimes walking a mile or two to his work. We ſeldom behold his nocturnal toils, and combats with the literal powers of darkneſs; but in the *day* we frequently ſee him, blaſted with chilling cold, wet to the ſkin, without ſhoes, or with only the fragments of them; without ſtockings; his coat and breeches in tatters, and his ſhirt in ſmutty rags; ſometimes with ſores bleeding, or with limbs twiſted or contracted, whilſt his miſery is rendered more pungent by his taſk-maſter, who has no feeling of his ſorrows!—You who have the hearts of men, and who have opportunities of ſeeing human miſery, will contemplate the condition of theſe poor beings, and judge if this picture bears a genuine likeneſs.

It is moreover well known, that there are ſome diſorders peculiar to perſons ſo employed, againſt which they ought to be guarded by a *climbing dreſs*, and due caution ſuited to ſuch circumſtances. If I am rightly informed, the climbing frequently occaſions

occaſions great heat in the *ſcrotum*, which if irritated by friction brings on cancerous diſorders. I have heard of four ſuch, who were attended in one workhouſe at one time. This diſorder might probably be prevented by proper precautions. Conſtant lavations when they return home from their work, muſt be of great moment to them.

Every maſter chimney-ſweeper ought to be obliged by law to provide a fit *climbing-dreſs*, as in other countries, to guard their perſons, in order to prevent the acrid qualities of the ſoot from preying on the health of theſe poor children; being as attentive to this part, as a ſurgeon to waſh his hands after a diſſection of a human body in a corrupted ſtate.

There is another diſorder which I am informed is common to the climbing boys. The ſoot drawn in by reſpiration, joined to the confined air of a chimney, naturally creates ſtrong thirſt: drinking plentifully upon it is apt to inflame the urinary paſſages, which is attended with other bad conſequences, moſt eaſily explained by men of ſcience.

ſcience. If the greateſt care is not taken to preſerve the perſons of theſe children, by clothing and bedding and *waſhing*, there can be no proper diſcharge by perſpiration, and conſequently the event muſt be highly injurious to their health.

I am, &c.

J. H.

LETTER

LETTER V.

A further detail of the miſerable ſtate of young Chimney-Sweepers.

My Lord and Gentlemen,

THE almoſt unavoidable miſeries attending the calling which is our preſent ſubject, ſeems to awaken every ſentiment of humanity; and inſtead of a careleſs, unfeeling treatment of theſe children, there ſhould be a more than common regard ſhewn to their wants. If the juſtice due to their tender age, is in no degree attended to, it muſt ultimately blaſt our character, and familiarize us to groſs inhumanity. The object is of a ſerious nature; it requires good regulations; and you will judge how far the duty of good magiſtrates calls for your interpoſition, as inſtruments

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in the hands of the common Father of the poor, to do them juſtice, and to ſhew them the mercy, which you implore at his hands, for your own offences!

It may be obſerved, that no other nation employs *boys* in ſweeping their chimnies, it being generally done by *men climbers*, or by bruſh-wood tied to a cord, by pulling it up and down the chimney, one man being at the top of it, and another on the hearth below. From the make of ſome of our chimnies, this may not be practicable; or if practicable, leſs cleanly, or more expenſive; not only from the danger of breaking tiles, but from the difficulty of getting to the tops of ſome chimnies, which are impeded by the earthen pots now in ſuch general uſe. It therefore behoves us the more, if we ſhould be conſtrained to continue the ſame method, to employ every humane and ſalutary expedient to alleviate the dangers and inconveniencies ſet forth.

To be deficient in kindneſs to ſuch objects, with our eyes open, is in effect to be barbarous in this cuſtom and manner.

Theſe boys generally drag a miſerable exiſtence from morning to night; ſome of them occaſionally depending on beggary from the tranſient ſpectator. Suppoſing the maſter to feed them, it is not uncommon, when he or his repreſentative catches a boy with any money that he has begged, to take it from him.

Suppoſing the boy kept from *ſtarving*, and not *maimed*, what *inſtruction* is given him? How is his health preſerved? As he advances to manhood, every temptation to wickedneſs, which ſuch a ſtate of miſery can expoſe him to, is preſented. The example he ſees in the ſtreets, among the moſt profligate of the human race, may eaſily render him a vagabond, if nothing worſe. How many become proficients in the arts which lead to the gallows, is hard to ſay. If but few of them are victims to the laws, they have the moſt gloomy proſpect of *living*, on any terms. If a boy has what among chimney-ſweepers is called a *good maſter*, or one who keeps himſelf out of the hands of juſtice, what attention is ſhewn

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to the *clothing*, *waſhing*, *lodging*, or *inſtruction* of their boys.

Whether the maſter depends on the chance cuſtom of the ſtreets, or conſtant, regular employment, it ſignifies but little to the boy, if what is neceſſary to his proper comfort and ſupport is not provided for him. Much may be aſcribed to the lowneſs of his condition; and to our great reproach, more to the *ſilence of the laws*, and our cuſtom reſpecting their ſtate of infancy. Perhaps you have not been officially informed of real facts. If you receive my letters as a prelude to a judicial information, you may find that theſe poor children are in a ſtate of ſuffering, not warranted by any law, divine or human: and to whom does it belong to redreſs them?—I ſucceeded for the infant parochial poor, which was as dark a buſineſs; but I was eighteen years younger; the object more immediately affected the lives of 2000 infants annually; and the remedy, tardy as it was, after a century of ſhame, ſeemed to be more eaſily come at. Of this I ſhall have occaſion to ſay more.——I am, &c. J. H.

LETTER VI.

The diſgrace of leaving any claſs of fellow-ſubjects in a ſtate unattended to.

My Lord and Gentlemen,

WHEN we conſider the ſervice performed by the chimney-ſweeping boys, may not the dark ſin of ingratitude be imputed to us? They are the inſtruments of a conſiderable part of our domeſtic cleanlineſs; freedom, in ſome degree, from the life-deſtroying evil, *ſmoky rooms*, and the more dreadful conflagration; and why they ſhould not be held in eſteem, in proportion to their uſefulneſs, may be as difficult to decide, as how we are become *unmerciful*.

As an inſtance in what manner theſe poor children are treated, I remember an anecdote of a little band of them, who had the

fortune to be ſupplied with Sundays cloth-ing: their faces, however, proclaimed them *chimney-ſweepers*. Curioſity, or information that churches were the houſes of God, car-ried them within the gates of a church; but alas! they were driven out by the beadle, with this taunt, "What have chimney-"ſweepers to do in a church?" Such an act of official tyranny cannot be repeated often, becauſe few of them are ever put in a condition to attend divine ſervice: maſters who are not attentive to their own duty, can hardly be ſuppoſed to think of their apprentices.

Theſe boys are the more pitiable, from the conſideration of their proſpect in life; for if they look forward to the day when their ſervitude is to ceaſe, the end of one kind of miſery is frequently the commence-ment of another, in which they are leſs pitied. It is not to be conceived that many of them can commence maſters; and the wages of a journeyman are miſerably low. Some grow too big for climbing at 12 or 14 years old. If a lad attempts to engage

in any other employment, it is ſo much the hard fortune of this claſs of people, to be treated contemptuouſly, that it is neceſſary to conceal his former employment. I have been inſtrumental in ſending ſome to ſea: having eſcaped with ſound limbs, and being qualified for climbing they might make their way, as well as other ſea-boys or landmen volunteers.

Common obſervation and acquaintance with the circumſtances of theſe boys, will teſtify what is ſet forth, to be a genuine repreſentation of their diſtreſs; and you will judge how far it is expedient to give them ſuch a hearing as may produce a reaſonable regulation, to be eſtabliſhed by the authority of law. Of all employments in the community, there is not one in which ſuch young perſons are ſubject to ſuch harſh treatment; and conſequently no one ſtands in the ſame need of protection. The laws may and ought to give them relief; but it can be accompliſhed only by the intervention of ſome potent advocate, ſuch as yourſelves!——I am, &c.

J. H.

LETTER VII.

Religion and humanity equally concerned in the relief of objects in diſtreſs.

My Lord and Gentlemen,

IN the comprehenſive view of legiſlation, particularly in a free country, it is an undeniable duty incumbent on every ſubject, in his proper line, to turn his thoughts to the *general good.* According to his education or fortune, his contemplative mind, or the leiſure which he enjoys, Providence calls on him to inveſtigate the circumſtances of individuals, and lend ſuccour to every one within the limits of his power, according to the want. If a habit of vanity or voluptuouſneſs, or a partial attention to the duties of the ſocial ſtate prevails, ſociety will ſuffer. We can never be qualified to

act our part well, if we do not prepare ourſelves for the enjoyment of thoſe pleaſures which our religion holds forth as an engagement to deeds of mercy!

Much has been occaſionally ſaid on the ſubject of *inſtructing* the lower claſſes of the people, as if the ſuperior in condition might exult over the inferior, by keeping him in ignorance of what is common to all of us as accountable creatures. Chriſtianity allows of no ſuch diſtinction among men: it is not neceſſary to the great plan of *ſubordination*, and it counteracts the divine principle of *charity*, and obedience on principle. *Inſtruction* is the foundation of ſocial connexions; the origin of obedience to human as well as divine laws, and the foundation of every thing that is humane, manly, rational, and religious: and as it is the inſtrument of drawing the line between the man and the brute, it is neceſſary even to the ſupport of *reaſon*.

To apply this doctrine to the chimney-ſweeper's boy, who is totally neglected, he is ſo much the leſs qualified to act his part,

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as a quiet and uſeful ſubject, whether in the line in which he is put, in his infancy, or that in which it is neceſſary for him to act, when he leaves his ſervitude: being yet a boy, after he has ſerved full ſeven years, he is often conſtrained to get his bread in ſome other way. Not to teach him the common principles of ſocial ties, is a violation of ſocial laws! So far as we neglect teaching the rudiments of our religion, we cheriſh a brutiſh ferocity, and expoſe ſociety to the evils which attend it. We owe it to God and our country, to inform our inferiors what our religion requires of them.

Whatever may be their condition in this world, if like *Lazarus* in the parable, they are honeſt in ſpite of their miſery, they ſhould look forward to a *ſtate of happineſs*: if induſtry will not afford the comforts of this world, the harder is their lot. If with all our boaſted lights in religion, we neglect our humanity, we ſhall put ourſelves in the condition of *Dives*, whoſe great offence was, that he did not live mindful of

his God;—and therefore forgot his neighbour.

In the caſe before us, we are bound by the ſtronger tie, from the conſideration that the poor child is employed in ſo perilous an office, at ſo tender an age. And as this may render him ſo much the weaker and ſhort-liv'd man, we owe him the more attention. In his calamitous ſituation, *cuſtom* may reconcile him to his miſery; but it is not leſs our duty to ſoften down the rigours of it. If we behold him covered with the trappings of diſtreſs, his perſon ſeldom waſhed, as his preſervation requires; and generally treated as if he bore not the *ſacred image of man*, we ſeem to reject the common rights of ſociety. Our conduct muſt appear, before God and man, as a manifeſt violation of our truſt, as guardians of the poor. But if *you*, who are veſted with the enſigns of authority, for the common preſervation, are not *attentive* that no outrage ſhall be committed; if *you* leave theſe poor boys out of your account, can it be ſaid that you perform *your* duty?

If

If we conſider our obligations in a *political* view only, the employment of a chimney-ſweeper's apprentice is very uſeful, and, as we preſume, abſolutely neceſſary to the community; yet if we appeal to the moſt tranſient obſervation for the extreme diſtreſs in which we find him, we muſt ſecretly bluſh: his tale correſponds with his appearance, and language fails in the deſcription of his miſery!

The condition of theſe children is the worſe from the conſideration how much opinion governs the world by *names*. If the boy ſurvives, and is of an age to commence *journeyman*, the number employed hardly affords him any favourable proſpect, ſo many perſons take up the office, who have not ſerved an apprenticeſhip. This is a practice generally condemned in other ſocial concerns: but what is this poor lad to do? Is he to try his fortune in the country? He may imagine he ſhall be received in a more cordial manner, at leaſt on terms more agreeable to the common dictates of humanity; but the experience of a few days convinces

him

him that he has deceived himſelf; for though he may have travelled under the moſt inclement ſky, he is ſhut out from the common ſhelter and refreſhment afforded to all other itinerant perſons; it is well if he is permitted to take up his lodging in a barn or a ſtable. His tinged ſkin, or his garb, blackened with ſoot, exclude him in a great meaſure from the common bounties of Heaven.

Such is the force of habit, and the negligence contracted by miſery, and ignorance of the means of ſelf-preſervation, that though there is water enough in the land to clean millions of chimney-ſweepers, the uſe of it will be neglected, and lazineſs or deſpair uniting with ignorance, will fruſtrate the deſign.

I am, &c.

J. H.

LETTER

LETTER VIII

The neceſſity of reſtraining regulations.

My Lord and Gentlemen,

THERE needs no poetical fiction, or hyperbolical declamation, to exaggerate the evil I am complaining of. *Cuſtom* works wonders in the œconomy of human life; but if we put ourſelves in the circumſtances of the poor boy, we might be almoſt tempted to prefer the ſituation of criminals in the quick-ſilver mines of the *Auſtrian* dominions, as deſcribed by the learned and ingenious author of a late publication, entitled the *Mine*. If we take only a tranſient view of what we ſee in our ſtreets, we may require ſome further evidence, in order to form an idea of what is fit and proper to be done, but we can never get at it if we never ſeek it.

There

There are many other occupations which ſhorten life, but none in which the helpleſs infant, *in his ſacred ſtate of life*, is ſo much violated: nor is there any in which a more ſcanty pay is provided; of which I ſhall more fully inform you, from the general view which I have taken. This object is indeed left too much to chance; and it is high time for us to waſh off the ſtain in our character, for the cruelties we connive at in regard to theſe poor children!

It is not the ſpectator only who complains: the ſobereſt men of the trade confeſs, that many of their fraternity are diſſolute in the extreme, ſpending their money without the leaſt diſcretion: but if ſuch perſons were fit to be truſted with the lives of ſubjects, they ſhould not be allowed to take apprentices in numbers far exceeding what is practiſed by the moſt reputable tradeſmen in all other branches. If I am rightly informed, ſome have abuſed the tacit permiſſion of the laws, and the ſupineneſs of thoſe whoſe humanity might lead them to interpoſe, ſo far, as to take ten,

twenty,

twenty, and even thirty apprentices, hardly knowing their names, or making any proviſion for them; violating the common ties of ſocial obligations, and the common rules of decency in all other caſes.

It is evident that a *regulation* to reſtrain, is indiſpenſably neceſſary; and that the maſter chimney-ſweepers ought to be formed into a fraternity, amenable to the laws of their country. *Police* is neceſſary for the œconomy and preſervation of a people entitled to a common freedom; the office of theſe children is a part of it; and if there is a violation of liberty, and a manifeſt offence againſt the merciful laws of the religion of *Chriſt*, can we be idle ſpectators with impunity?

If their complaints were brought by you before our legiſlators, as guardians of the people, to ſuppoſe that redreſs could not be obtained, would be an offence to our common liberty. If they are utterly incapable of ſeeking redreſs by pleading their own cauſe, we muſt plead for them; otherwiſe we not only abandon this part of our duty, but habituate ourſelves to ſo manifeſt a

violation

violation of humanity, as endangers the great plan both of liberty and *religion!* If we may be remiſs in one caſe, we may be ſo in another, and leave the whole to *chance.* The great ſyſtem of moral and religious duties being thus violated, the bulwark of our *hope in a life to come* will be ſubject to be trampled down, and we ſhall ſubſcribe to our own perdition. We can hope for mercy no longer than we ſhew it; and to whom ſhall we ſhew it, if not to thoſe who have no helper, but ſuch as take up their cauſe on principle?

I am, &c.

J. H.

LETTER

LETTER IX.

A due regard to the poor eſſential to our religion, liberty, and national character.

My Lord and Gentlemen,

I Have endeavoured to convey to you as perfect and copious an idea of the calamitous ſtate of the children, who are called apprentices to chimney-ſweepers, as the lights which I have been enabled to obtain will furniſh. It is a matter of *police*; but it goes to the honour of our country, even in her rank among civilized nations! Your authority as magiſtrates, moſt undoubtedly extends to it. While I plead this cauſe, I conſider myſelf as an advocate for the great duty of protecting every member of the community, known to be in real diſtreſs, through the apparent defects of our *police*: but

but they muſt be taken in their order, upon true grounds, and not vague pretenſions. There are as many devices among us, to extort compaſſion, as there are ingenious arts for the embelliſhment of life, which in their conſequences create miſery, and early death. But can it be conſiſtent to leave the illiterate and moſt undiſciplined part of our fellow-ſubjects, without any law or cuſtom of reſtraint, in ſo tender a concern as the care of the health, morals, and common means of preſerving life, in the perſons of ſo many ſubjects in an infant ſtate? Can it be reconciled on any principle of moral or political prudence; or the character of a civilized *Chriſtian* nation? As a community of Chriſtians, we are to remember the *mercy* which our religion requires: and as ſubjects of a free country, we are bound by the ſtronger obligations, to ſee juſtice done to thoſe who are oppreſt; but when this extends to the *infant ſtate*, in which the parties cannot plead their own cauſe, if no one pleads it for them, the evil may at length reach to a magnitude too horrible to think of!

Nor

Nor is this all that ought to be ſaid in behalf of theſe poor children: an active and judicious attention to the *riſing generation*, is neceſſary to our exiſtence. If we deſert any claſs of the people, and leave it defenceleſs, it is not an ideal evil, but a ſubſtantial cauſe of miſery. It is that thing by which ſo great a part of mankind have introduced ſlavery into the world, and all its woes!

The defenceleſs urchins in queſtion were born under the ſame laws, and in their innocent ſtate entitled to the ſame protection as the firſt ſubject of the realm. And if liberty diffuſes her influence like light, or the common air, as the principle by which ſhe ſubſiſts, no injury can be done to any part of the community without a violation of that principle. He who feels a propenſity to laugh at ſuch reaſoning, applied to chimney-ſweepers boys, his mind may be beſt ſuited to Aſiatic deſpotiſm.

It is well known within a certain circle, that an effort was made, ſome years ſince, in favour of theſe poor ſubjects, and it was attended with a temporary alleviation of

their miſery. It was not then referred to *your* conſideration, and conſequently did not find ſo powerful a protection as it might have had. I can by no means join in opinion with him who ſigns, *Thouſands*, that I have miſtaken the perſons to whom the object properly belongs, as I flatter myſelf the event will juſtify. Whatever difficulties you may encounter, they cannot be of a nature to intimidate you.

How can it be conceived that magiſtrates of prime dignity, and the firſt conſideration in ſuch a country as this, can ſuffer any violence or cruelty to be exerciſed within their reſpective juriſdictions? Where evidence is deficient or contradictory, aſſent ought to be withheld till time ſhall ripen the means of more full and ample ſatisfaction: but in this caſe our ſenſes concur in their teſtimony: we *ſee*, and therefore *believe*: we cannot reaſonably demand further materials for enquiry. As to evidence of facts, many of thoſe miſerable beings carry it with them, in their ſtature, their twiſted legs, their ſore eyes, their cheeks furrowed with tears,

and

and other external marks. I hope no languid diſpoſition, though it ſeems to be a feature in our preſent character, will obſtruct a reformation ſo eſſential to humanity. Refinements leaning to inaction, have a great affinity with that timid temper, which repreſents a lion as in the way, and dries up the pith and marrow of all enterprize.

Order often riſes out of confuſion. The parties offending are not above, nor below the laws. We ſee every day how much we are governed by *faſhion* and *opinion*: and let this object be reduced to a regular ſyſtem, and the moſt ferocious of the fraternity of chimney-ſweepers will be humanized. When he ſees you appear and intereſt yourſelves upon *principle*, in ſpite of his bad habits he will find a pleaſure in ſhewing a tenderneſs for theſe young children. That propenſity to which his heart is now a ſtranger, will grow familiar to him, and he will ceaſe to exerciſe his wonted cruelty. He will not drive theſe poor boys, at ſo tender an age, and before their limbs acquire their form and proper ſtrength, into perilous

climbings, and heart-piercing difficulties. He will not hazard the loſs of the *licence* which may be given him conditionally; and if he commits any violence, he may be otherwiſe ſubject to be called to ſevere account.

Many things are done with impunity in theſe great cities, more than in towns and villages, where every one's eyes are upon his neighbour's conduct: and we ought to be the more watchful. "They are but "children, and children of the pooreſt peo- "ple, and they muſt take their chance"— of what? not ſurely of being ſlaughtered, leſs decently than a butcher kills a lamb! Cuſtom in many caſes is the law; but it is oftentimes the law of fools, and the law of tyrants. When a *faſhion* is new, it may be rejected becauſe of its novelty; when old, and the evils which attend it are known, we may honour ourſelves in the breach of it!

I am, &c.

J.

LETTER

LETTER X.

The prevalency of cuſtom when founded on reaſon and juſtice.

My Lord and Gentlemen,

PERHAPS you will be ſurprized when I tell you, that in ſome places in this kingdom, *young females* are employed in this climbing buſineſs; and there may be ſome reaſons why they ſhould take a ſhare in this drudgery; but I think there are others more weighty, why it ſhould be confined to males. If chaſtity is the jewel of the female heart, and external decency its barrier, what will the female world ſay to ſuch a liberty? There may be leſs climbing work in the country than with us, but the girls being ſmaller in perſon than boys, may be ſometimes ſelected for this buſineſs; and as the

boys are forced up a narrow chimney naked, the tranſition may be eaſy for girls to be ſerved in the ſame manner; and may not the diſtinction of men and brutes be levelled by the force of *cuſtom?* I hope you will guard with watchful eyes, and remember that theſe children do not act by choice, but by compulſion.

Cuſtoms are changeable, particularly in this country. It is a caſe in point with reſpect to the infant parochial poor of the bills of mortality. It had been a cuſtom, perhaps for a century, to give them a miſerable life of two or three months only! When the humane act of his preſent majeſty made its public entrance into theſe cities, in 1767, it proclaimed a deliverance to infants. Its operative effects appeared immediately. The mode preſcribed for preſerving them, removed all difficulties: the parochial officers diſdained the conduct of their predeceſſors, in ſaving the pariſh money, and loſing the life. They ſoon diſcovered, that there was a pleaſure more native to the human heart, in preſerving life, than

in

in deſtroying it. And this claſs of ſubjects now add to our numbers, and our character as a humane people, in as great a proportion as in common life: ſo it may be in the preſervation of the health and ſtrength of young chimney-ſweepers, provided we treat them as humanity dictates.

I do not mean to make any compariſon with regard to the quality of perſons, but on one ſide applying to the tyranny of *cuſtom*; and on the other, to the efficacy of a law fitly digeſted, and the execution of it happily provided for. The act abovementioned provides for five *triennial* officers, perſons of moſt dignity in their reſpective pariſhes, as guardians of the infant poor; but the overſeers under the 43d Eliz. having ſince acquitted themſelves well, this part of the act has, I believe, ceaſed to operate.

In the caſe of the young chimney-ſweepers, they ſtand in no need of nurſes as infants do; they can help themſelves, provided a decent regard is ſhewn to their wants. Without giving the occupation, or the maſters that direct it, any harſh

epithets, the queſtion is, how we may ſoften down the miſery complained of, by a proper and effectual law for the honour of our country, and the ſupport of our common nature!

I am, &c.

J. H.

LETTER XI.

Invocation to humanity. Letters written to Maſter Chimney-Sweepers in 1773.

My Lord and Gentlemen,

IT ſeems to be a queſtion of difficulty, which is the greater evil, the mode which we employ to cleanſe our chimnies, or the inhuman manner in which the great majority of the climbing-boys who clean them are treated. The mode, particularly in theſe cities, is very different from the practice of other nations, if we go no further than

than Scotland, and different from our own practice in many other parts of this kingdom; but the manner of treating the boys who perform the work, is leſs civilized than any thing recorded of the cuſtoms of our anceſtors in their rudeſt ſtate. That relief *may* be given in the mode of doing this buſineſs, is obvious; it ſurely may be rectified by proper regulations. But will ſuch regulations be obtained without the interpoſition of perſons in authority? It is not expected that it will. It muſt be for your honour and reputation to treat this cuſtom as worthy of your notice; and the correction of it as an object which in its nature is far from being impracticable.

The ordinary way of deciding upon queſtions of this kind, where no clamour is made by the party ſuffering, is by ſaying, "the "deſign is viſionary or impracticable." In matters of private paſſion or convenience, which claſh with the moſt obvious duties, men often ſuffer themſelves to be enthralled by cuſtom, where common-ſenſe and reſolution equally militate againſt the evil of it;

in

in this caſe, the national diſgrace is manifeſt: it is an offence againſt God; and nature cries againſt us! Conſidering the duty which we all owe to the common Parent of mankind, and to theſe boys as well as the ſons of peers, and the obligation we are under to protect every fellow-ſubject who ſtands in need of protection, we cannot overlook a caſe in which the offended are in no capacity to plead their own cauſe. Let us therefore hope that the æra is come for the reſtoration of our humanity in this inſtance.

What was done in 1773 in favour of chimney-ſweepers, operated in a ſmall degree only; but it may be conſidered as preparatory to your interpoſition, and the mediation of your weight and intereſt; and it is preſumed, that by your authority the trueſt information will be obtained. Some very reſpectable merchants of the city of London, and other perſons of conſideration in the moral and political world, took up the cauſe ſo far back as 1773. They formed themſelves into a committee, and

met

met ſeveral times. Among other tranſactions, they ſent the following letters, which for the purity of their intention may merit your peruſal:

Letter ſent in June, 1773, *to the reſpective* Chimney-ſweepers, *whoſe habitations could be found.*

SIR,

" I Am ordered to aſk the favour of you " to let me know if you have any ob- " jections to the form of the indenture " which I ſend you incloſed. You ſee for " what good and wholeſome ends it is de- " ſigned, as well for your intereſt, as that " of the poor boys whom you employ in " your buſineſs. Be aſſured, that the bet- " ter they are treated, according to reaſon, " the more able and willing they will be to " ſerve you: and if you teach them the " love and fear of God, the great Lord of " all, they will love and fear you, their " maſter; and the more you ſecure their " fidelity, the more reſpectable will you

" and

" and your trade become, and your work
" perchance be ſo much the better paid for.

" When you think ſeriouſly of this mat-
" ter, you will diſcover that your own
" welfare depends on your *humanity*; and
" towards whom, *my friend*, can this be
" exerciſed, if not to thoſe who depend on
" you for their bread, and the comforts of
" life? In this view, the happineſs and
" miſery of the life to come, are ſet in the
" ſtrongeſt light before *your* eyes.

" I write to *you* in the ſame terms as to
" others of your trade; it being hardly poſſi-
" ble for us to be acquainted with the cha-
" racter or conduct of every particular
" *maſter chimney-ſweeper*, in theſe vaſt cities:
" at the ſame time we are not ignorant that
" there are ſome maſters in your trade who
" poſſeſs the charity of *Chriſtians*, and the
" feelings of *men*; and would rather die,
" than treat their ſervants or apprentices
" cruelly, with reſpect to the care of their
" bodies or their ſouls.

" Some maſters provide proper rooms and
" beds, regular and ſufficient food, and ſuch

" clothes as the poor child can appear in, to
" worſhip God on the ſabbath-day. Others
" think of no ſuch thing.

" It is alſo to be preſumed, that there are
" ſome who treat their apprentices with a
" kindneſs ſuited to their tender age. Per-
" haps you have children of your own: it
" cannot be many years ſince you was a
" child: for heaven's ſake conſider what
" you owe to God, and your country, un-
" der circumſtances ſo intereſting to reli-
" gion and humanity. The pooreſt is as
" precious in the ſight of Him who is our
" common Father, as the richeſt of man-
" kind. And you muſt be ſenſible that the
" want of *inſtruction*, in a chriſtian country,
" puts a poor boy in a worſe ſtate than if he
" had been born a heathen.

" If any maſter chimney-ſweeper ſo un-
" dervalues the trade as to make a traffic in
" human creatures, taking a greater num-
" ber of apprentices than he can employ,
" leaving them in the ſummer ſeaſon to
" provide for themſelves, every man of can-
" dour will be of opinion, that ſuch a

" maſter

" maſter ſhould be reſtrained by *law*: why
" ſhould he not reſtrain himſelf by *reaſon*,
" and make this the law and rule of his
" practice? If he is doing that which
" *hurts the trade*, he is an enemy to it.
" There are many things in the world re-
" preſented worſe than they really are; but
" you cannot deny that the chief part of
" the boys in your trade are really treated
" very *cruelly*.

" Nothing is ſo pleaſant to the nature of
" man, as *humanity*; let it be faſhionable,
" and your trade will become an object of
" regard, as a neceſſary, uſeful, and well-
" conducted employment, for the good of
" ſociety. Soot no more defiles a man, than
" wheaten flour.

" If you, *my good friend*, think this let-
" ter deſerves an anſwer, you will give one.
" Our intention in this enquiry, is equally
" good to all: we are *your friends*, as well
" as friends to your apprentices. We have
" no intereſt in view; and if you give us
" your thoughts upon the incloſed form
" of an indenture, you may depend that all

" due

" due regard ſhall be ſhewn to your opi-
" nion, that this buſineſs may be conducted
" hereafter, in the beſt manner, for your
" own intereſt. Things cannot go on as
" they have done! Why ſhould *your trade*,
" above all others, be a monument of ſhame
" and diſgrace to us as a civilized chriſtian
" nation?

" I am, with all due regard,
" By order of the Committee,
SIR,
" Your moſt obedient ſervant,
Clerk.

" *John's Coffee-houſe, near the Royal-Exchange.*

" P. S. I have the pleaſure to acquaint
" you, that a beginning has been made in
" placing out apprentices to your trade."

This letter was received by many of the Maſters; and there was reaſon to apprehend, that on ſome it made as deep an impreſſion as could be expected.

I am, &c.

J. H.

LETTER

LETTER XII.

Letter in December 1773. The force of example.

My Lord and Gentlemen,

NOT contented with the event of the letter written ſix months before, in December following another of the ſame import, addreſſed to the ſame perſons, tried its fortune, viz.

SIR,

" NOtwithſtanding the ſtrong application made to maſter chimney-ſweepers, " the number of boys placed out apprentice " by the regular indenture propoſed by our " committee, doth not yet exeeed *fifteen.* " And we are ſorry to obſerve the ſtreets of " theſe cities yet ſwarm with deplorable " objects; many poor children, of a very " tender

" tender age, unwaſhed, in ſooty garments,
" not half covering their limbs in the
" coldeſt weather, preſent themſelves to
" every paſſenger, even on the ſabbath-day.

" We are at the ſame time to do juſtice,
" by acquainting you, that we are informed
" by our emiſſaries, that the poor boys of
" ſome few maſters in your trade, are much
" better clothed and fed than they were be-
" fore. Being determined not to give up
" the cauſe of pity and compaſſion, we
" again appeal to your candour and hu-
" manity.

" With regard to your taking three or
" four times the number of apprentices you
" can poſſibly employ regularly; letting
" them out for hire in the winter, without
" taking care to provide the neceſſaries of
" life for them, it is a moſt unwarrantable
" practice. The conſequence of it is, that
" you leave them to ſubſiſt by downright
" beggary in the ſummer ſeaſon, which is
" no leſs ſhameful in a civilized country.

" Thus it happens that you expoſe theſe
" wretched children, of whom many are

" orphans, to every temptation, and lay
" the foundation of their becoming the vileſt
" and moſt abandoned of mankind.

" Theſe are conſiderations of a ſerious
" nature, and demand a public regulation.
" If ſuch evils cannot be remedied by an
" aſſociation of your trade, we are to inform
" you, that it is intended to appeal to par-
" liament, in hopes of reſtraining maſter
" chimney-ſweepers from taking above a
" certain number of apprentices, as the
" weavers of *Spitalfields* have been, agree-
" able to the regulation eſtabliſhed by the
" authority of the legiſlature. This ſeems
" to be abſolutely neceſſary in defence of
" humanity, religion, and good order. We
" appeal to your hearts, as free ſubjects,
" whether the meaneſt of us, born in this
" land of liberty, ought to languiſh in want
" of neceſſary food and raiment; or be de-
" prived of ſuch chriſtian inſtruction, as
" the religion of our country requires? If
" the ſupreme magiſtrate cannot enſlave a
" ſubject, how much leſs ought *you* to have
" the privilege of degrading human nature,

" by plunging your fellow-creatures into
" ſuch a depth of miſery?

I am, with all due regard,

Clerk.

" *John's Coffee-houſe, near*
" *the Royal-Exchange.*

In conſequence of the form of the indenture alluded to, a number of apprentices were regularly placed out, under the direction of the gentlemen concerned; but this did not enforce the better œconomy, with reſpect to the conduct of the maſter; and therefore the charge of the *five ſhilling* ſtamp was conſidered as a fruitleſs expence. *Letters* ſo ſtrongly pointed could not fail of operating for a time; and it was common for theſe boys, when enquired of, to anſwer in a pleaſing accent, that " ſince the act of " parliament," for ſo they called the *letters*, " our maſters have treated us in a better " manner than before:" but this was not of long continuance; nor is it to be conceived that any method leſs than a legiſlative regulation can controul a body of

people, of whom many are as unaccuſtomed to moral as to political diſcipline. Let us therefore hope that you will, both in your public and private capacity, conſider ſuch a number of young perſons, ſo induſtrious and unoffending, ſo young and diſtreſſed, not only worthy of your regard, but entitled to your protection, and conſequently ſee juſtice done them.

In performing a duty ſo intereſting to humanity, you will teach us all to be the more ſubſtantially conſiderate. Your conduct cannot fail to correct the evil doings of numbers of the lower claſſes, with reſpect to the care of the morals, and even the lives of their children; and it may be preſumed, that the example will operate on the higher orders, and induce them to think that the road to heaven is not quite ſo ſmooth as to require no attention to their ſteps. If it is the rational tenderneſs and religious mercy which they ſhew to others that will ultimately avail them, when all the empty objects of vanity or ambition are

eclipſed

eclipſed in utter darkneſs; and that this, and this only, is their *tranſient hour of trial*, they will conſider the more what it is they are doing. So may your example operate!

I am aware of the difficulties which will be ſtarted as to any alteration of the *mode* of ſweeping chimnies: This can be only partial, and will depend on individuals, and their feelings, the ſituation of houſes, and how the interior of their chimnies may be come at: but as to the treatment of the boys, in other reſpects ſo neceſſary, it is obvious to every one, who indulges a ſingle ſentiment of humanity, what ought to be done!

I am, &c.

J. H.

LETTER XIII.

Duty towards young Chimney-Sweepers as fellow-creatures and fellow-ſubjects, a ſerious conſideration.

My Lord and Gentlemen,

HOW can we better employ any reaſonable device, or ingenious contrivance that mechanic art or humanity can ſuggeſt, than by alleviating the miſeries which any particular part of our fellow-creatures and fellow-ſubjects are ſuffering? Whether it relate to the ordinary courſe of animal life, or the means of preſerving ſo many rational and accountable beings, neither humanity, nor the charity which our religion inſpires, can poſſibly reſt in peace, reſigned to Heaven, while Heaven's laws are offended by our being careleſs obſervers of the ſufferings of creatures of our own nature:

nature: but where we are ſo nearly related by the ties of common ſubjection, under the ſame laws, not to defend the miſerable, is to ſin againſt nature and the great Ruler of the world!

If we ſhew attention to the ſyſtem of man's redemption, and the omnipotency of divine mercy, ſo far as we can fathom it, we ſhall diſcover the analogy of the mercy which we hope to receive as a reward for the mercy ſhewn: not to leave the dogs to lick the ſores of the diſtreſt, but to pour into their wounds wine and oil. The aweful image of man, demands ſo much mercy; his mind is framed to compaſſion; he lives by looking forward and behind: but how will he be qualified to inſpect his own condition, or receive conſolation in his own diſtreſſes, under a conſciouſneſs of offence, unleſs he makes the ſtate of his fellow-creatures his object? For man, the *Meſſiah* took the human nature; for man, *he bled*; and it is for charity to man, for which he promiſes everlaſting happineſs. We cheriſh the blooming hope of glory, in a life to

come, as we conduct ourſelves here below; and make juſtice and mercy our companions and our guides. Our preſent felicity depends on *hope*: this is the genuine balm of life; let us be watchful that it be founded in the *mercy* which we make the ruling principle of our lives.

Let us then attentively conſider how the condition of theſe beings may be mended; and as a conſequence, our humanity cheriſhed; our *religious* principles vindicated; and our *national honour* retrieved. We may refine on government, as if it were ſomething diſtinct from moral rectitude; but in the iſſue we ſhall diſcover that liberty loſes her charms as humanity decays. This is the "immediate jewel of our ſouls!"

And what does our ſocial being and condition teach? We depend on theſe boys for a portion of our comfort. Even their miſeries work for good. If children, and the fruit of the womb, are an heritage, and a gift which come of the Lord; to whom are they ſuch, if not to a nation? And for what purpoſe were they given, but to increaſe the proſperity of a nation?

tion? They are the ſeal of the inſtrument which gives a title under God to its exiſtence. If theſe children are the inſtruments of our domeſtic ſafety and comfort, to treat them unworthily, as if they were of no value, is repugnant to every ſalutary principle. There is an attention due to their youth, to inſtruct them how to be men. To ſhew reſpect to one, and to trample another under our feet, can never be conſiſtent with liberty.

Here is no ſplendor of anceſtry, no pomp of title, no glitter of wealth: here is not even manhood to plough our fields, or fight our battles; yet do their perſons, in the ſight of God, derive a ſanctity much ſuperior to ſuch diſtinctions. They are human beings of our own kind; and as children, objects of our mercy and tendereſt kindneſs: they are, or might be, of the houſehold of faith, and under the protection of Heaven, by the inſtrumentality of magiſtrates, and other ſubjects: they are evidently in diſtreſs, in proportion as their office degrades them in our opinion: ſhall we alſo inſult them with ſevere and inhuman treatment?

ment? These poor children make an intereſting part of one great whole, and are entitled to every advantage of our common liberty. We are juſtly tenacious of the rights of *property*, and guard life with ſo religious an attention, that maiming another is a capital offence. Shall we not then act as guardian ſpirits to theſe children, as children, as human beings, and as *we* are Chriſtians, whether *they* know any thing of their religion or not? If the ſecurity of empire is in the hand of the Omnipotent, and man his inſtrument, the religious charity which ſubjects ſhew to each other, becomes political prudence: it is the ligament that forms and unites their ſtrength; and we cannot neglect it without offending againſt firſt principles. If ſuch attention is neceſſary to the exiſtence of a free ſtate, the only kind of ſtate regiſtered in the archives of heaven, the meaneſt as well as the moſt exalted ſubject is under one common protection: and this guardianſhip of the common rights of mankind, is an object on which the Almighty Father of men and angels

angels looks down with ſuch pleaſure, that as we exerciſe mercy and compaſſion to others, he has *promiſed* to ſhew it to us.

What are the reſtleſs paſſions which diſturb the peace of human life, but ſo many tranſgreſſions againſt the laws of God? What are the real or diſſimulate inquietudes, not founded on the reaſon of things, which ſhew themſelves ſo much in *our government*, even ſometimes to threaten the ſubverſion of it, but ſo many offences againſt the laws of the prince of peace? If virtue and liberty are ſiſters, and religion eſſential to the life of both; and religion cannot be exerciſed without charity; let us enquire *where it is moſt wanted, without reſpect to perſons!*—The love of our country, without the love of Him who is the protector of it, is but a *name*. If we walk humbly before Him, and do juſtice and ſhew mercy, conſulting the ſecurity and felicity of the individuals who compoſe it, it will become our primary object, and not otherwiſe.

If ſuch is the ſtate of man reſpecting his fellow-creatures, and ſuch the reference to the

the great Author of nature, in every the minuteſt part of his works, it ſurely conſtitutes a debt to thoſe who bear his image. A cuſtom or habit of contempt or diſregard ariſing from the external trappings of miſery, created by an occupation which we impoſe on fellow-creatures, and children, has ſomething in it moſt exceedingly indignant. In what manner can it be preſumed that He will judge of it, whoſe eyes are too pure to behold injuſtice or iniquity of any kind? If the more deplorable the condition, the more we paſs by on the other ſide; to judge with any conſiſtency, the more we muſt fall under the imputation of the prieſt in the parable.

I am, &c.

J. H.

LETTER

LETTER XIV.

Deſcription of a particular boy, become a cripple by ſweeping chimnies.

My Lord and Gentlemen,

I Have now before my eyes a particular object of the miſery I have endeavoured to deſcribe. He who cheriſhes hope in a life to come, on Chriſtian principles, muſt follow the banners of Chriſt. Would not *He* have ſhewn mercy in ſuch a caſe? The object in queſtion, to judge from his diſcourſe, has the full exerciſe of his reaſon, and all its glorious faculties; and affections not inferior to the common race of men. He is now twelve years of age, a cripple on crutches, hardly three feet ſeven inches in ſtature. He began to climb chimnies *before* he was five years of age, his bones not having acquired a fit degree of ſtrength. The ſame treat-

treatment of the colt would be deemed a tranſgreſſion againſt all the rules of ruſtic œconomy towards the beaſt that periſhes. In conſequence of this treatment, his legs and feet reſemble an S more than an L. His hair felt like a hog's briſtles, and his head like a warm cinder. He was once *blind* for ſix months, *but ſtill he did his work.* Notwithſtanding his arduous conteſt with nature for life and ſcanty bread, what attention has been ſhewn him?—Being out of his time of ſervitude, as a *reward* for his labours and ſufferings, he is become an object of the parochial charity. Not as a ſeaman maimed, has he any claim on the cheſt at *Chatham*, or any other cheſt, but what pure humanity directs.

It is the cuſtom of the trade of chimney-ſweepers to enter into a ſecond ſeven years indenture; but in the maimed condition of this poor boy, it is hardly to be expected of the virtue of chimney-ſweepers, that one will take the crippled leavings of another. What kind of indentures are uſed among them, ſhould be enquired into: the legality

may

may be diſputable. Being aſked if he ever went to church, his anſwer was, "I have no "hat for my head, nor buckles for my ſhoes." He had no cap but that in which he climbed chimnies; this they uſually pull over their faces to guard their eyes. His pariſh coat was whole; and he reported that he had one ſhirt beſides his climbing ragged dreſs. He repeats the Lord's-prayer, and the Belief, ſeemingly acquired by the force of genius, or an inſtinctive power: he had alſo heard of ſuch a thing as *Commandments.*

This boy, from a certain active ſpirit and goodneſs of heart, ſtill performs his duty to his miſtreſs; and though he cannot move on the ſurface of the earth without the aſſiſtance of crutches, and has aid from the pariſh, he climbs and ſweeps a chimney. He muſt neceſſarily depend on his hands and knees. *How* he uſes his knees, uncovered and unfortified, is difficult to deſcribe or comprehend, but as they may be grown callous by uſe. It is wonderful that every boy, who begins ſo young, is not crippled. They are generally bandy-leg'd.

Beginning

Beginning to climb before the bone has acquired a ſolidity, the daily preſſure neceſſarily gives the leg a twiſt, if it does not diſtort the ancles.

The leather which I conceive to be moſt fit for the protection of the knees, is of horſe-hide, made pliable by oil, being firſt formed into a proper ſhape to fit the knees, and ſecured on them by ligaments; this might adminiſter to the relief of the climber; there might alſo be a guard for the ſhoulders and back.

The cap which is ſpoken of, may be alſo much improved if it were kept clean, and lined with linen, ſo as to guard the eyes effectually, yet allow of room for breathing.

By the benignity of ſome true Chriſtian ladies of his neighbourhood, this boy ſtands a fair chance of being put into ſome other way of life, by which he may get his bread, if by their means he can recover from the ſoreneſs of his eyes. Under this load of complicated miſery *he* may obtain a *deliverance*, when hundreds drop, and find an aſylum only in an early peaceful grave. If it

is

is aſked, may not ſuch a charity be conſtrued into an encouragement to a maſter or miſtreſs to treat other children with cruelty; or afford a reaſon for a parent to believe the ſame kindneſs may be ſhewn to another? This is indeed more than *poſſible*; but the true meaning, as I underſtand, is, that this boy is reſcued from the iron claws of cruelty, in the laſt reſort, and as a monument of reproach to thoſe in whoſe hands he has been ſorely treated; and conſequently it ſhould operate as a leſſon of *reprehenſion*, without any danger to the cauſe of virtue and human kindneſs!

I am, &c.

J. H.

LETTER XV.

Various modes by which relief might be given in ſweeping chimnies, and the neceſſity of ſhewing mercy in every mode.

My Lord and Gentlemen,

THE moſt part of our chimnies have a kind of plaiſter lining: if ſome are left rough, the ſurface which may bruize, may at the ſame time ſerve as a hold in the boy's ſqueezing himſelf up and down.

One might conceive that it would be a great relief if a chain were ſecured at or near the top of a chimney, of ſufficient ſtrength for the boy to raiſe and lower himſelf, the chimney being of dimenſions large enough for his perſon: and if he were not under eight years of age, it is to be preſumed he would have ſtrength, without the dangerous exertions which more tender years expoſe children to. This chain might be contrived with ſuch a ſe-

a ſecurity at top, that no robber could attempt getting into a houſe by means of it, more than they can do by means of their own contrivances. This might prevent part of the diſtreſs which our preſent method creates: if in five hundred families it ſaved a ſingle life to the community, the nation would be the gainer in a pecuniary view, and ſtill more in point of reputation, and the cultivation of the duties of humanity.

It is alſo reaſonable to ſuppoſe that this work might be done, as it is actually performed in Ruſſia, by bruſhwood tied to a cord with a weight affixed, which carries it down from the top of the chimney, from whence it is pulled up again, and in a ſhort time, by this ſimple method, the chimney is ſwept. Many of the twining paſſages for ſmoke in their ſtoves, are left to clean themſelves. At the ſame time, I apprehend it to be more than poſſible among us, for *men* to perform the whole work of chimney-ſweeping, partly by ſhort ladders properly contrived to unite with each other; partly by bruſhes with long handles to unite in the ſame manner, ſo as to be rendered portable.

But I do not expect any total change of cuſtom: I reaſon upon a ſuppoſition that climbing to ſweep our chimnies is ſo much confirmed by long practice, at leaſt in the metropolis, that the moſt difficult part of this attempt, would be to abandon the mode. To plead for exceptions to chimnies of certain narrow dimenſions, that they be not cleaned by climbing, is neceſſary; and if chimnies of larger dimenſions *muſt* be ſwept in our uſual method, for Heaven's ſake let us think how we may render the lives of theſe children, who are to ſweep them, whether they be long or ſhort, as comfortable as the nature of their circumſtances will admit.

It may be hoped that you, as *magiſtrates*, and *good citizens*, will enter ſeriouſly into the conſideration of the object, at leaſt to mitigate the ſufferings of theſe children. If a child is killed, or dies of the wounds or bruiſes received in one of theſe narrow-chimnied operations, what can this compulſive act be deemed leſs than *murder?* If there is not room for him to go up properly dreſt, for his tender body to reſiſt the friction neceſſary,

what is it we ſubſcribe to? We may at leaſt be acceſſaries to a *murder*. If we rob a boy of his limbs or his ſight, what compenſation do we make him? We make him none: but ſit down calmly, to the repaſt dreſt by the fire of the chimney, where the boy perhaps was offered as a victim to a *cruel cuſtom*. We hang men for offences of a complexion leſs horrible.

Whatever indulgence you may think proper to recommend, I beg leave to ſay, that for chimnies built ſo narrow, that hardly a child of five or ſix years old can climb up, though naked, an exception ſhould be required by law: there are ſome of this kind. I am told of an inſtance, in which the poor child wept bitterly, but he was *forced up*, and did the buſineſs; but not without the fleſh of his back being much bruiſed, and part of the ſkin torn off. This can be no very extraordinary event; but to be a ſpectator of ſuch a ſcene, without lamenting the ſeverity of the practice, and deviſing means to prevent the repetition, would be wonderful. To receive the law from

cuſtom, againſt our better judgment and our hearts, is a ſcandal to our nation, in this inſtance, of which we have much reaſon to complain.

Let every ſubject take the labour of thinking, and appeal to Heaven in favour of that *diſtributive juſtice* which Providence has ordained for the government of the world, and on which the felicity of human life depends; he will then conclude, that in this caſe, there is a neceſſity for the intervention of the laws of our country, and the regulations which reaſon and experience may dictate. If we mean to emerge from a ſtate of *barbariſm*, reſpecting theſe poor children, we muſt mend their condition!

It is eaſy to compute, that under the ſituation of our preſent taxes, and the expences of every houſekeeper, the maſter chimney-ſweeper can hardly be ſuppoſed ſuperior to the tyranny of *cuſtom:* he muſt therefore be checked and controlled by law, and public regulation, and he ſhould be alſo aſſiſted in a reaſonable manner. To enable ſuch maſters to do juſtice, and to ſhew mercy to a

claſs of ſubjects, whoſe infancy and poverty deprive them of all the means of ſuccour and complaint, except ſuch as is taken up in this ſpontaneous manner, we muſt enact laws for their relief. If we leave them unprotected, we leave ourſelves in a lawleſs condition, and our humanity deeply wounded!

I am, &c.

J. H.

LETTER XVI.

Eſtimate of the probable income of Chimney-ſweepers; whence it ariſes, and how it may be improved.

My Lord and Gentlemen,

HAVING gone thus far in giving a detail of the ſufferings of the climbing boys, children who are apprenticed out to chimney-ſweepers, I am ambitious of forming a general idea of their income, and what their number and con-

nexions may conſiſt in. If we can give our ſubject preciſion by rules, and comprehenſion by ſyſtem, we ſhall accompliſh the work, which we aim at, in the moſt honourable and diſtinguiſhed manner.

I have given you an ample ſentimental detail of the miſeries created through the defect of law, and of the efforts hitherto employed to rectify the abuſe. This Letter ſhall lay a foundation for an enquiry what the pecuniary ability of chimney-ſweepers may be, and how it is ſuited to their ſupport. For the more accurate inveſtigation, it ſeems neceſſary to enquire what may be the number of the maſters, ſervants, and apprentices in the trade; and according to the beſt lights which I have been able to obtain of them, their connexions and dependants, the account may ſtand nearly thus:

100 Maſter chimney-ſweepers who are houſe-keepers.
200 Men ſervants to them.
400 Boys apprentices to them, and climbers.

50 In-

150 Inferior maſters, who are inmates, and live in a more irregular manner.

150 Boys climbers, apprentices to them.

900

900 Perſons, comprehending wives, children, female ſervants, aged parents, young brothers and ſiſters, &c. dependent on them.

1800 Subjects living on the produce of chimney-ſweeping.

I compute the houſes whoſe chimnies are ſwept by the 900 perſons, one with another, to have three chimnies; I ſet them at 105,000; conſequently theſe will make 315,000 chimnies to be ſwept.

If the climbing part is performed by boys, it will amount to 630 chimnies each; though an expert boy, ſuch as the poor cripple I mentioned to you, if he had conſtant employment within a ſmall diſtance, could ſweep ſix or ſeven chimnies in a morning.

We

We may thus reckon:	£.	s.	d.
105,000 Common chimnies, at 6*d.* - -	2625	0	0
105,000 at 4½*d.* - -	1968	15	0
60,000 Kitchen chimnies, at 1*s.* 6*d.* - -	4500	0	0
45,000 Dittos at 9*d.* -	1687	10	0
60,000 Ditto, a ſecond time, at 1*s.* 6*d.* - -	4500	0	0
30,000 Ditto, a third time, at 1*s.* 6*d.* - -	2250	0	0
105,000 Houſes, rendering 4 buſhels of ſoot to each houſe, at 6*d.* per buſhel -	10,500	0	0
	28,031	5	0
Which bring 1800 perſons per head to - - - - -	15	11	5

It may be obſerved, that this medium goes on the preſumption that not an half part of the inhabitants ſweep their kitchen chimnies three times in a year; and though ſome do it oftener, there are many who hardly

hardly perform this operation once in a year: and ſo miſerable is this trade, that it is not uncommon to ſweep for the ſoot only which the chimney may produce. It may be alſo further queſtioned if many of the 105,000 houſes make more than one or two fires to require the chimney to be ſwept; and ſome are ſwept for 2 *d.* others 3*d.* 4*d.*; and conſequently on the average, this computation is acknowledged to be near the mark, and a foundation on which to eſtimate the general income of the trade.

The ordinary expence of a domeſtic ſervant in livery is 40*l.* Of the people at large in town and country, 8*l.* is ſuppoſed to be near the annual expence of each perſon, comprehending the aged and the infant; ſo that, reckoned in the metropolis, 100 of the maſters paying *ſcot* and *lot*, 15*l.* 11*s.* 5*d.* cannot be a high eſtimate. Some of theſe people conſume no ſmall portion of ſtrong drink. As to the poor boys, I ſet them at about 6*l.* only; and I mean to meliorate their condition by a general encouragement of the trade.

In

In this view I recommend an additional 6*d.* to the common price of 6*d.* for the ſweeping every common chimney; for this, reckoning two chimnies to a houſe, will give an increaſe of

	£.	s.	d.
	5250	0	0

which, were it confined to the 500 boys, would make a proviſion for each of

	9	10	10

and conſequently there will be ſo much the greater reaſon for 4 or 5*l.* being devoted to the preſervation of the boy, more than at preſent comes to his ſhare. Other circumſtances concurring to *enforce* the execution of proper regulations, this work may be accompliſhed.

The ſoot is vulgarly ſuppoſed to be more in quantity, and higher in price; and ſo it may be before it comes to the farmer; but the adulterations are great to make out 420,000 buſhels. Hops, after being uſed, are burnt, ſweepings of cork, aſhes, cinders, and ſaw-duſt wetted to cleave to the ſoot, are mixed. The carriage for thirty miles round the town doubles the price it is ſold for by the chimney-ſweepers to the *ſoot-dealers*. The quantity reaches in the eſteem of ſome,

as

as high as half a million of buſhels: this part alſo requires a regulation.

If we mean to put the poor boys in a condition of being better fed and taught, clothed, lodged, and waſhed, we muſt hold out *rewards* as well as *puniſhments*, and prove that we mean to put the maſter in ſo much a better condition, that if he neglects his apprentices, there will be the ſtronger reaſon for puniſhing him: and it may be preſumed that the event will depend on *example*, and the *cuſtom* of exerciſing men in the duties of *humanity*.

I am well aware of the nature of the traffic of mankind, that the ſeller will not ſell unleſs he gains as much as will ſupport him: the labourer will not work at wages which will not give him bread; nor will the buyer pay for what he has occaſion for, but at a certain price; if he deems the demand fraudulent or extortionable, he will at leaſt ſuſpend his purchaſe. If a trade of any kind is very profitable, numbers will engage in it; therefore the interpoſition of the legiſlator or magiſtrate is but ſeldom neceſſary.

neceſſary. I grant this; and that if the *equilibrium* is preſerved in any decent degree, an attempt to favour the labourer muſt be at the expence of the perſon who employs him. But in the caſe of the chimney-ſweepers, there is a remarkable diſtinction. In common life the *adult* ſupports the *infant* till a certain age, or ability for labour; in this inſtance the infant ſupports the adult; that is, ſo much more duty and ſervice is performed by the former than the latter. The boy being ſo young, and making no bargain, the labour is ſet at too low a rate; cuſtom has given a ſanction to it, and the poor boy, in his infant ſtate, having no friend nor advocate, becomes a victim at the altar of miſery which cuſtom has ſet up. As the maſter chimney-ſweeper employs the moſt abject and diſtreſſed ſubjects, in an infant ſtate, he beſtows ſo little coſt on them, that he ſets their ſervice at a proportionable rate, the conſequence of which is, that he makes no neceſſary proviſion for the ſupport of the boys lives. Cuſtom confirms him in a cruel habit, as if it were a *fair proceeding*.

And

And ſhall we, or will you, my Lord and Gentlemen, guardians of the poor, continue to look on and ſay, *alas, poor boys*, and *do* nothing for their relief? God and man forbid! You will ſurely think the object too ſerious to be trifled with, or reaſoned away, any longer. Though you may find a few reaſonable kind of beings among the maſters, the great maſs ſtand in need of regulation more than can be eaſily imagined. *We* cannot ſay to them, "you ſhall not "ſweep any chimney for leſs than a ſhil-"ling;" but we may ſay, and ought to direct, that "it ſhall be lawful for you to "demand a ſhilling; and if you do not "take due and reaſonable care of your "climbing boys and apprentices, your li-"cences ſhall be taken from you, and you "ſhall be moreover ſubject to ſuch and "ſuch penalties."

Suppoſing a fraternity or corporation eſtabliſhed, *they* may add, "We will hear com-"plaints, and for the honour of our trade, "and the defence of the diſtreſſed, as well "as for the ſake of juſtice, it muſt be at

"your

"your peril if you are not juſt; or, in "other words, if you are not humane and "merciful, and reaſonably attentive to the "preſervation of your climbing boys, ac-"cording to the conditions of the law "which is laid before you. If you fear "God or man, you will *obey*. If you fear "neither, you will be puniſhed in both "worlds. You may depend that it ſhall "be our buſineſs, as it is our duty, to ſee "juſtice done. Your climbing boys ſhall "be treated in a proper manner, or you "ſhall not be permitted to be a chimney-"ſweeper any longer."

This is the language which might be ſpoken to them, and which I preſume you, as magiſtrates, ſhould recommend and countenance. As to the increaſe of price, let us ſuppoſe this buſineſs done by men only, two perſons would be neceſſary; and could we ſuppoſe they would be contented, or that they could live in this great town on leſs than 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* per day each, comprehending the ſale of their ſoot; and it is probable that the morning's work would be the

only

only work they would do, at leaſt in their ſooty garb: if we meant to confine the office to *men only*, they would find their own price: but my meaning is, to harmonize with the common dictates of the humanity of every reaſonable being, who has given the ſubject a moment's conſideration; and to eſtabliſh and govern a fraternity of chimney-ſweepers, as other men are governed, by the force of rewards and puniſhments, that theſe poor children may not ſuffer under unwarrantable treatment. If this appears to be a ſtain in our government, of which the *police*, in ſpite of all our refinements, is a part, to look on with indifference will be a reproach to a civilized nation.

It is not ſuppoſed a man will live and neglect his own child, who compoſe a part of the community; but it is probable that the more attentive he is to his own, the better care he will take of thoſe of other people.

A maſter chimney-ſweeper having a wife, two children, and two men ſervants, and four climbing boys, paying his houſe-rent and taxes, having an income of 16*l.* to 18*l.*

each perſon, including the wages of two men ſervants, cannot be ſaid to be pampered. Much may depend on the good or bad mind of the maſter, but cuſtom ſtill predominates, and if we do not make war with a bad cuſtom, and ſuppreſs it, it will become the more cruel tyrant: nor can an evil of this kind exiſt, without training up many bad companions.

The additional price propoſed to be given in favour of theſe boys, will not be a new thing to every houſe-keeper: many people of diſtinction now pay it. And let us not forget, that where the reaſon of things loſes its influence, men avail themſelves of the laws of their country, and where theſe are deficient, they make new ones. A law was once made on a ſingle event of a man's being cut in the face and disfigured.

The climbing boy is the chief engine of the operation; and becauſe he is a boy, and miſerably poor, therefore he is treated as if he were an animal of a different ſpecies. He is abſolutely in a ſtate of ſuffering under a tyranny more grievous than Egyptian bondage.

dage. We are indebted to theſe boys for ſafety to our houſes from fire, and for the comfort of our lives in freedom from ſmoke. The rate of payment, conſidering the nature of the ſervice done, is the loweſt that can be imagined. The ſoldier is to ſtand fire for 6d. a day, but this may happen to him but once during his life, or never happen; and if he dies, it is under the canopy of the heavens. As long as he lives, he breathes the pure air, and is generally ſuppoſed to have a choice when he enters into a military life: the poor child is condemned, by the death, or poverty, or profligacy of the parent, to hazard his life and his limbs in the dark paths of a ſtrait chimney, at a time when he cannot judge of his ſervice or his danger. If we judge for him, let us at leaſt conſider his wants!

I am, &c.

J. H.

LETTER XVII.

The regulations of Chimney-ſweepers, as might be eſtabliſhed by law, to form them into a fraternity.

My Lord and Gentlemen,

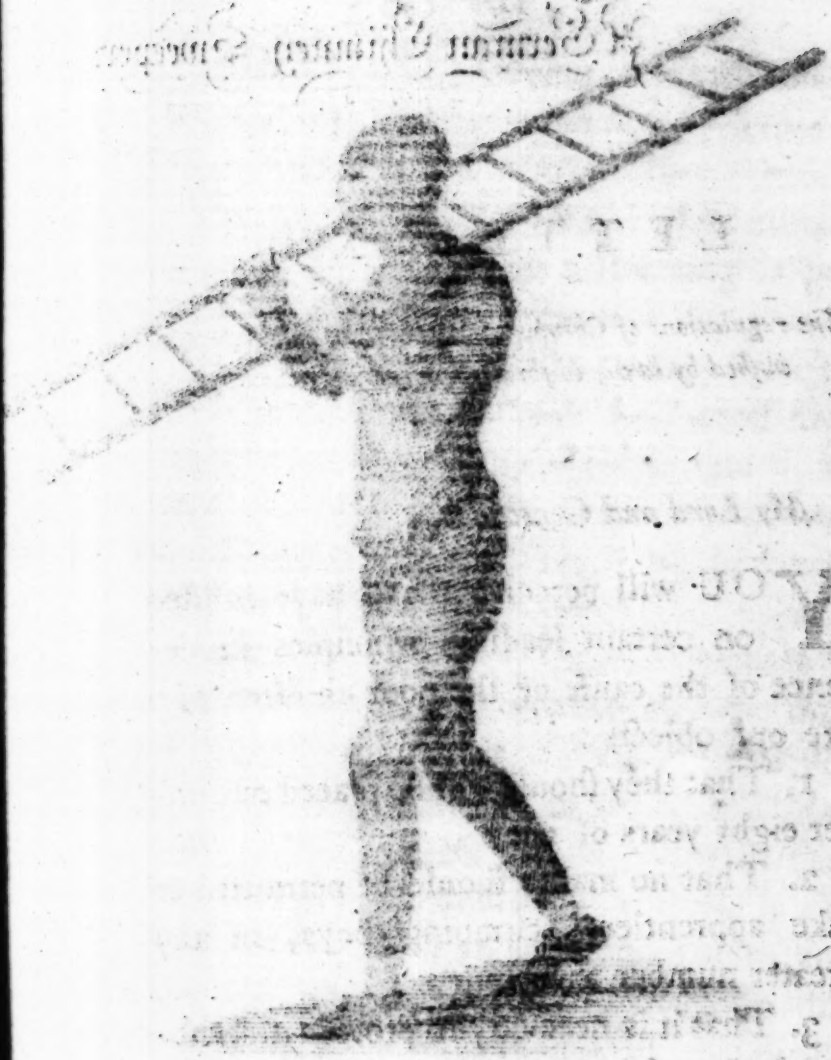
YOU will perceive that I have inſiſted on certain leading principles in defence of the cauſe of the poor children who are our objects:

1. That they ſhould not be placed out under eight years of age:

2. That no maſter ſhould be permitted to take apprentices, climbing-boys, in any greater number than four:

3. That it is neceſſary to provide a climbing-dreſs, a ſuit for ordinary uſe, whole and proper to protect theſe children from the inclemency of the ſkies; and alſo a Sunday's ſuit.

Inſtead



A German Chimney Sweeper.

Erect in posture, & in strength confirm'd;
His smutty Task performd, he smiles unhurt.

Inſtead of this proviſion, the great majority of them appear to have no clothes at all, except the rags in which they climb.

Through the whole empire of Germany, as I underſtand, chimney-ſweeping is performed by *men*, their chimneys being made large, and accommodated to manly ſtrength. The ſoot which comes from their wood-fires, is ſuppoſed to be more acrid than that which proceeds from our coals. Their climbing-dreſs is of leather; the cap being ſo formed that they can bring it over their eyes, if occaſion requires, and they can pull it up over their mouth: it has a cape to cover their ſhoulders, and conſiſts of a cloſe veſt, which comes to the waiſt, and breeches which extend to the ankles. It is preſumed that they fortify their knees and elbows, if not their backs, with an additional piece; and they uſe ladders as well as climb. In this manner they perform their work, appearing when their ſmutty taſk is done, clean like other perſons, without any of the veſtiges of our miſerable boys. This dreſs ſeems to be fit only for the work: as they wear

linen or woollen under it, leather is not too cold. If I am rightly informed, it is not twenty years ſince we had a ſimilar dreſs for theſe poor boys, made of ſheep-ſkin, and it uſually coſt 7*s.* 6*d.* The waiſtcoat was laced on, and tucked under the breeches; and though ſome ſoot penetrated, it ſerved as a great protection. This was the practice in the eaſtern parts of theſe cities: and why was it diſcontinued? becauſe it coſt 7*s.* 6*d.* and required to be renewed once or twice in a year. When a boy went up a chimney on fire, it was apt to parch and break the leather; in conſequence of which, it ſeems as if the maſters were more inclined to burn the ſkin of a living boy, than of a dead ſheep. Whether this be the proper dreſs for the freedom of the perſons of the boys, may be a queſtion; but why they ſhould be forced up a *chimney on fire*, when there are ſeveral ways of extinguiſhing the flame, can be reconciled on no principle but the *cruelty* exerciſed on theſe poor children! This act of barbarity ought to be prohibited by law: and this

ſingle

ſingle article would greatly facilitate the general ſyſtem of a *reform*.

Another great point muſt be attended to: there are ſo many adventurers not bred to the trade, who interpoſe, it muſt be well conſidered to whom licences may, with propriety, be granted; and keep the number ſo limited, that the maſters may live, and providing for the boys, prevent ſuch execrable bad treatment of them. There ſeems to be much ſtronger reaſons for this reſtraint of numbers, than for the weavers in *Spitalfields*. The regulation of thoſe weavers was done by the wiſdom and tenderneſs of the legiſlature, to prevent the ſcene of miſery which they had brought on themſelves. This regulation will go to the root of the diſeaſe, and adminiſter to the cure which we are ſeeking in behalf of theſe poor boys. There is no danger, that I can diſcover, of wanting hands to clean chimnies: Treat them as human beings, and they will be ready to ſerve you.

In every department of government, legiſlators generally appeal to thoſe who have

the reputation of being moſt verſed in the arts and myſteries of their own trade. They are ſuppoſed to be under a prudent reſtriction not to place an implicit faith in every thing they hear. The evidence given by parties muſt be ſuppoſed to have a bias to their intereſt. But notwithſtanding the corruption of the heart, it may be hoped, that in every branch of the traffic of mankind, there are ſome perſons to be found who may be induced to ſpeak the truth, and whoſe judgment may qualify them to give proper information.

It is hardly to be preſumed that a body of people, ſo little diſciplined as chimney-ſweepers generally are, can be reduced into ſuch order as is conſiſtent with a humane well-regulated community, without certain municipal regulations. Our anceſtors were of this opinion in reſpect to their general ſyſtem, or we ſhould not have had ſo many trading companies as exiſt at this time, ſome of which poſſeſs very conſiderable wealth, yet none are more neceſſary to our comfort and ſafety than chimney-ſweepers.

There

There can be no danger that thoſe who follow this occupation will become too powerful; they are at preſent in ſo miſerable a ſtate, that their chief agents, the climbing-boys, are univerſally confeſſed to be in the moſt abject condition that human nature can be expoſed to.

To prevent this calamity, and do juſtice to the cauſe of mercy and common humanity, I beg leave to refer to your ſerious conſideration, the following regulations; and if your mercy as men and Chriſtians, and your office and duty as magiſtrates, prompt you to ſolicit the legiſlature for an act of parliament for the purpoſe, I apprehend that you will avoid the imputation of indolence and timidity, which in the great view of the object you may be otherwiſe expoſed to, numbers of our fellow-ſubjects being at this time truly alarmed at the inhuman treatment of theſe poor children.

I have converſed with ſome maſters in the trade, who may be truſted; ſeveral of them, contrary to what I had conceived, are indulged with children from ſome work-

houſes,

houſes. My opinion is, that if a few reſponſible men were put under ſuitable regulations, they would ſoon reduce their fraternity into order, and acquit themſelves properly.

1. I propoſe that the chimney-ſweepers be formed into a *Company*, conſiſting of a Maſter, Warden, and Court of Aſſiſtants of *ſeven* of the moſt reſpectable Maſter-Chimney-ſweepers, any number not leſs than *five*, viz. the maſter, or his repreſentative the chairman, with any *four*, to conſtitute a meeting.

The number muſt be ſmall, for this plain reaſon, that the intelligent part of this claſs of men is ſmall; and moreover, the leſs civilized a community is, the greater number it conſiſts of, the greater confuſion there will be, and the greater the difficulty of reducing their buſineſs into order.

2. Upon the failure or demiſe of the maſter, warden, or court of aſſiſtants, or any one or more of them, the court of aldermen (or the juſtices in their ſeſſions) to appoint one or more in their place, ſo as to keep

keep the company of chimney-ſweepers complete.

3. Their meeting to be every month, at an hour and place appointed, when all complaints may be laid before them, the majority to decide upon any queſtion: in caſe of equality of numbers, the maſter, or his repreſentative, to decide: the minutes of their proceedings to be regularly kept.

4. To tax their own trade for a ſmall allowance for a clerk to the company.

Here it may be obſerved, that the cities of London and Weſtminſter having diſtinct authorities, the act might extend to two fraternities, under the ſame common regulations, one to be choſen by the lord-mayor and court of aldermen, or court of ſeſſion, as abovementioned, the other by the magiſtrates attending the Rotation-Office in Weſtminſter, not being leſs in number than ſeven; or it may be expedient to make two diſtinct public acts.

5. The juriſdiction of one fraternity to extend to the city of London, and a certain diſtance; and that for the city and liberties

of Weſtminſter, and the limits of the bills of mortality, to comprehend the vaſt pariſh of Mary-le-Bone, and a certain diſtance around, if ſo it ſhould be thought the moſt ſafe and proper.—Theſe fraternities would give the clue to the reſt of the kingdom. Though cuſtoms differ in different parts, a *merciful regulation* would ſtill be the apparent object of the act or acts.

6. If the ſaid maſter, warden, and court of aſſiſtants, ſhould occaſionally find themſelves incompetent to the execution of any of the powers veſted in them, to appeal to any two of the magiſtrates in their reſpective diviſions, the ſaid magiſtrates to inforce the execution of the act in a ſummary way.

7. And in order to the better ſupport of a regular conſtitution, no chimney-ſweeper to act without a *licence*, the ſame to be numbered and regiſtered in a book provided for that purpoſe; that which is for the city of London to be lodged in the Chamberlain's-Office; and that for the city and liberties of Weſtminſter in the Rotation-Office; the ſaid books to contain the names of the holders

of

of ſuch licences, with columns in which ſhall be entered—their place of abode,—the number of journeymen they keep,—the number of apprentices they take;—the parties being bound to report to the reſpective offices when they change their abode, and where they may be found, or be ſubject to loſe their licences, and be diſqualified to act as chimney-ſweepers.

8. And in order to make ſuch licences eaſy to be obtained, no greater ſum to be paid than one ſhilling, with the price of the ſtamp, which may be ſimilar.

9. There being at this time a great number of chimney-ſweepers who are *inmates*, yet take apprentices without limitation of number, and without ability to maintain them with any degree of propriety; and by the eaſe with which they change their place of reſidence, their apprentices are often unable to make their ſettlements appear. In order to prevent ſuch inconveniences, and the many miſeries which attend them, no licence to be granted to any perſon for chimney-ſweeping, unleſs, within

the

the ſpace of months, he or ſhe ſhall become a houſeholder, paying the ordinary taxes.

This requiſition would render many of the ſuppoſed fifty maſters *inmates*, ſober and conſiderate, that they might continue maſters on legal principles, and treat their apprentices in a proper manner, which it is morally impoſſible they can do in their preſent ſituation; and as *ſix* months, and perhaps a longer time, may be given them, if more of the buſineſs fell into the hands of the beſt eſtabliſhed and moſt reputable maſters, the end of the act would be the moſt effectually anſwered.

10. All indentures of apprenticeſhip to be made agreeable to the form annexed, and be regiſtered in the ſame places where the licences are entered, otherwiſe to be deemed illegal; and no *climbing boy* to ſerve without an indenture.

11. No chimney-ſweeper ſhall employ any apprentice or ſervant as a climbing-boy under the age of eight years.

Some magiſtrates are of opinion they ought not to be employed being under *ten* years

years of age; but it ought to be conſidered that a boy of fifteen years old, after ſerving ſeven years, may be more eaſily replaced in ſome other calling, than if he were ſeventeen years old; and from the nature of this employment, many of the climbing-boys muſt go into other buſineſs.

12. No chimney-ſweeper to be permitted to *let out* his apprentices, climbing-boys, being under fourteen years of age, to hire.

13. No chimney-ſweeper ſhall be permitted to keep, as an apprentice or ſervant, a greater number of climbing-boys than four at one time.

14. Many of theſe boys having ſerved an apprenticeſhip of ſeven years before they are yet arrived to an age to provide for themſelves, by which they are expoſed to want, every maſter ſhall be bound by indenture to allow competent wages for the ſpace of three years after the firſt ſeven are expired, the lad conſenting thereto; and in caſe he ſhould not incline to follow the trade, upon making the indenture, the maſter ſhall give ſecurity to place him out

out to ſome other trade or employment, to the ſatisfaction of the Company of Chimney-ſweepers, or otherwiſe pay a ſum, not exceeding five pounds, to the pariſh to which he belongs, in order that due care be taken that after the ſervice of his childhood, he ſhall not be expoſed to diſtreſs, and become a vagabond for want of employment.

This would be the beſt ſecurity for a regular œconomy, that after ſo many years of hard duty, a proviſion ſhould be made ſuitable to the condition of the ſubject, which is otherwiſe ſo much more ſevere than that of any other ſervitude.

15. It having been practiſed by chimney-ſweepers to take apprentices in order to call the ſtreets for work, leaving them from morning to night, by which means the boys are expoſed to become beggars and vagabonds, and learn many evil practices, no chimney-ſweeper ſhould be permitted to ſend his or her apprentice or apprentices, being under the age of years, to call the ſtreets; and in that caſe the maſter chimney-ſweeper, or his journeyman, ſhall attend the climbing-boy ſo *calling*.

16. No *journeyman* chimney-ſweeper ſhall be allowed to take any apprentice.

17. Every chimney-ſweeper ſhall provide a fit dreſs for his climbing-boys, to be kept whole and in proper order, that their perſons may be as much as poſſible guarded againſt the friction and hazard of climbing: He ſhall alſo provide and allow his *climbing-boys* each a full ſuit for daily uſe, and another for the Sabbath-day; and the climbing-boys ſhall have full liberty to attend the public worſhip morning and evening.

18. Every maſter chimney-ſweeper ſhall be provided with fit and proper conveniences for the effectual waſhing of his climbing-boys, and cauſe them to keep their bodies clean, on their daily return from work.

19. No perſon ſhall be ſent up a chimney to ſweep or clean it, if the ſame is of any leſs dimenſion than by inches, but the ſame ſhall be ſwept or cleanſed by ſome other means, ſo that no life may be hazarded in any chimney of leſs dimenſions.

N. B. There are many inſtances of boys

being forced up into chimnies ſo ſtrait, that it is morally impoſſible they ſhould return uninjured, or without imminent danger of their lives.

20. No climbing-boy ſhall be ſent up a chimney when on fire, but the other ordinary means of extinguiſhing the flames, ſhall be uſed.

N. B. If the flames are violent, the boy cannot live; if they are not violent, there is time for ſupplying water from the top, or uſing ſuch methods as experience has taught us.

21. And as the trade of chimney-ſweeping apparently makes ſo miſerable a proviſion for *climbing-boys*, in order the more effectually to furniſh them with the neceſſaries of life, food, raiment, cleanſing their perſons, decent lodging, and ſuitable inſtruction, it ſhall be lawful to demand one ſhilling for every chimney, not being a kitchen chimney; and eighteen-pence for a kitchen chimney.

I am, &c.

J. H.

LETTER

LETTER XVIII.

Further obſervations on the articles propoſed for framing an act of parliament.

My Lord and Gentlemen,

I FEEL myſelf conſtrained to repeat my earneſt ſolicitations, that you will be pleaſed to conſider the ſituation of this trade of *chimney-ſweeping*, as more ſingular in its circumſtances, than any other in our whole domeſtic polity. There is no other, amongſt us, carried on in ſo great a degree by children, ſo hazardous in its nature, and in its conſequences ſo injurious to health. Cuſtom has introduced and eſtabliſhed a *ſeverity of ſervice* from children of five to twelve years of age, beyond what is recorded in hiſtory, ancient or modern, ſacred or prophane. Though we read of human ſacri-

fices, they are the ſad effects of moral blindneſs, and the overſhadowings of corruption of heart, but ſtill theſe had their view. We are enthralled in a kind of idolatrous practice of offering to ignoranec, indolence, or convenience; and I muſt confeſs, for my own part, I ſo little expect any change of *mode*, that I do not think myſelf warranted to propoſe it: I only mean to render our method more eaſy, or as little ſevere as poſſible.

This object is ſo remarkable, I muſt remind you, that when the labour of an apprenticeſhip of ſeven years is gone through, the knowledge acquired, and the ſervice performed, with all the ſufferings attending it, are ſo utterly loſt to the parties, that not half the *climbing-boys* can, at any rate, follow their trade, could they obtain by it a comfortable ſupport. Conſequently there is a debt incumbent on us, as a part of the community, to conſtruct a law, ſuited to this peculiar exigency, in aid of an extraordinary defect, not to be found in any other part of our polity.

To

To what extent your credit, as magiſtrates, is concerned, I do not preſume to determine, but it ſeems to be my duty, as a moral agent, a ſubject, and a man, under my peculiar ſituation and turn of thought, boldly to maintain what I have aſſerted, and leave the reſt to heaven, and to thoſe whom it may concern. Without retaining the tender paſſions in my cauſe, I may, as a Chriſtian, plead the ſacred obligations of charity, to render the lives of theſe poor children as comfortable as the nature of their circumſtances will admit of.

Of the *twenty-one* articles, with which I preſent you, I know not of one that I apprehend to be ſuperfluous. The whole may be digeſted, by your ſuperior abilities, into a more regular ſyſtem; but I truſt that you will not do your work by halves. If you obtain a law upon the great principle of *mercy*, humanity, and the policy of preſerving life, it will be ſteady and conſiſtent. There will ſtill remain the duty of ſeeing it carried into execution; and this will neceſſarily require ſome attention, and per-

haps a proper officer or two, as deputations of your courts, may be neceſſary for a ſeaſon, till diſcipline is reſtored.

The 9th article, prohibiting the acting without a licence; and the 21ſt, giving a liberty of requiring a ſhilling for a chimney where it uſed to be but *ſixpence*; though the addition ſhould be obtainable only of the higher or middle claſs of the people, are two articles, which will be the great bulwarks of the law in queſtion, holding out a reſtraint on them who do ill, and a *reward* for the diligent and humane. There can be no harm done, if ſome of the lower maſters become journeymen.—And as to boys out of their time, the uſual wages is 5 *l.* per ann. and board. If the maſter cannot accommodate his late apprentice, he may give 5 *l.* to the pariſh to provide a proper maſter. This muſt neceſſarily influence the conduct of maſters, and throw the buſineſs into the better kind of hands. The great object of the bill is to *prevent oppreſſion*. The perſon who can leaſt afford to add to the uſual price paid for ſweeping a

chimney or two, once in a year, may bargain for the work, and ſhould conſider the poors-rate, in relief of the miſery which very penurious payments occaſion.—There never will be wanting, as in other parts of life, ſome who will ſeek their bread at an under-price. The poor ſerve the poor for a poor price. The laſt article will not therefore affect the pooreſt part, eſpecially as there is no penal injunction for one to pay, or for another to receive, but a *neceſſary condition implied*, by means of which the moſt miſerable part of our ſpecies may be relieved. If we can reſtore them to ſome degree of equality, on the great principle of common rights to the neceſſaries of life, when gained by induſtry, we ſhall do a ſervice acceptable in the ſight of God and man! This will alſo lead us gently into a knowledge of our ſubject, not by a paſſive lamentation of the ſad condition of *fellow-creatures*, but an active generous aſſiſtance of them.

The loweſt of houſewives, who think moſt of the art and myſtery of *ſaving ſix-*

pence, may judge favourably of the 21ſt article; for whether ſhe has any child of her own, or not, an attentive view of the perſons of theſe poor fellow-creatures, and a rehearſal of their ſtory, will melt her with compaſſion, and ſhe will throw in her pence into the common treaſury of humanity. Cuſtom being thus ſet againſt cuſtom, that which is virtuous, and tends moſt to the preſervation of mankind, will carry the prize; eſpecially if that is taken into the account, which the fooliſh only can poſſibly forget,—*Hope in a life to come, by the inſtrumentality of the mercy exerciſed in this!*

I believe I have not omitted any thing that is material; but it may not be ſo eaſy a taſk, in a buſineſs of this kind, to digeſt the whole without a formal enquiry; and my knowledge in law goes but a little way; I hope yours will extend to the ſubduing of difficulties, not to the making of them. A more copious examination of the parties concerned may remove the obſtacles that may occur; though it is not to be conceived that

that they will all harmonize in opinion. Something will alſo be left to the humanity of individuals; and there is more reaſon to attend to the argument for the cauſe, than to the frivolity of reaſons which a capricious oppoſition may create.

A bad cuſtom has prevailed on ſyſtem, or no-ſyſtem, for a ſeries of years: it requires reſolution to ſubdue it. Therefore, hoping that you, as *magiſtrates*, will give proof of the ſtrength of your judgment, the goodneſs of your hearts, your knowledge of the world, and the means of removing difficulties, I truſt that you will ſeriouſly conſider what it is you owe to God and your country, with the ſame reſpect to the ſacred rights of ſubjects in *poverty*, as in the height of opulency! I finiſh with this obvious remark: it is high time to throw away the ſhackles of a *cruel and infamous cuſtom*; and we ought no longer to bear ſo groſs a violation of the ſacred obligations by which we are bound, both by our religion and liberty!

Heartily

Heartily praying for your proſperity, and the happy events of all your undertakings, not forgetting this before us,

I am, with great reſpect,

My Lord and Gentlemen,

Your moſt humble

and obedient ſervant,

JONAS HANWAY.

Appendix.

The Indenture propoſed.

AS it was the poverty and diſtreſs of pariſh-children which induced the legiſlature to reduce the value of the *ſtamps*, on a pair of *their* indentures, *to twelve pence*, it is reaſonable to ſuppoſe that the poor boys placed out to chimney-ſweepers, will, for the *ſame reaſon*, be thought to merit the ſame indulgence. The duty upon indentures is now increaſed to *twelve ſhillings*, —a formidable ſum to people in this humble line of life: it might even prevent the boy's being bound at all, except by pariſh-*indentures*, which is by far the leſſer number.

ber. Such an expence might leave them, as I believe is the caſe of many at preſent, almoſt without the protection of the magiſtrate, or the means of aſcertaining their reſpective parochial ſettlements; and conſequently in a ſtate of accumulated miſery.

THIS Indenture, made the day of in the year of the reign of our Sovereign Lord George the Third, by the grace of God, of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, King, Defender of the Faith, and ſo forth, and in the year of our Lord One thouſand ſeven hundred and eighty- : Between *A. B.* of the age of years, ſon of *B. B.* of the pariſh of , in the county of , of the one part; and *C. D.* of ſtreet, in the pariſh of , in the county of aforeſaid, Chimney-ſweeper, of the other part, Witneſſeth, That the ſaid *A. B.*, with the conſent of the ſaid *B. B.*, his father, doth, by theſe preſents, put and place himſelf apprentice to the

the ſaid *C. D.*, to learn the art and myſtery of a chimney-ſweeper; and with him to dwell and ſerve from the day of the date of theſe preſents, for and during the term of ſeven years from hence next enſuing, and fully to be complete and ended; during all which time the ſaid apprentice his ſaid maſter faithfully ſhall ſerve and obey, his ſecrets keep, and his lawful commands every-where gladly do and perform: He ſhall not haunt ale-houſes or gaming-houſes, nor abſent himſelf from the ſervice of his ſaid maſter, day or night, without his leave; but in all things, as a faithful apprentice, ſhall behave himſelf towards his ſaid maſter, and all his, during his ſaid term. And the ſaid *C. D.*, in conſideration of the good-will which he hath and beareth towards the ſaid *A. B.*, and of the faithful ſervice ſo to be performed by him, doth hereby covenant, promiſe, and agree to and with the ſaid *A. B.*, that he the ſaid *C. D.*, his ſaid apprentice in the art and myſtery of a chimney-ſweeper, which he now uſeth, ſhall and will teach and inſtruct,

inſtruct, or cauſe to be taught and inſtructed in the beſt manner that he can; And ſhall and will provide and allow unto the ſaid apprentice, during all the ſaid term, meet, competent, and ſufficient meat, drink, waſhing, lodging, apparel, and all other things neceſſary and fit for an apprentice (that is to ſay) for his food, three wholeſome meals every day, one of which to be of ſweet ſound meat, with ſmall beer, and in ſufficient quantity; and for his lodging a bed and bedſtead, with good whole blankets, and ſuch other bedding as is neceſſary for reſt and the preſervation of health. And whereas, from the nature of the buſineſs of a chimney-ſweeper, it is requiſite for the boys employed in climbing, to have a dreſs particularly ſuited to that purpoſe, which dreſs is fit only for that part of the occupation, the ſaid *C. D. doth* hereby alſo covenant, promiſe, and agree, to allow and deliver to the ſaid apprentice, during the term aforeſaid, over and above the ſaid dreſs proper for climbing, two whole and complete ſuits of clothing, with ſuitable

linen,

linen, ſtockings and ſhoes, one to be worn on the week days, at ſuch times of the day as the ſaid apprentice ſhall not be employed in his buſineſs; and the other on the Sabbath-day. And further, That the ſaid *C. D.* ſhall and will cauſe his ſaid apprentice to be thoroughly waſhed and cleanſed from ſoot and dirt upon his daily return from his work; and he ſhall attend at the public worſhip of God conſtantly, twice every Sabbath-day; and ſhall teach his ſaid apprentice, or cauſe or procure him to be taught, the Lord's Prayer, the Belief, the Ten Commandments, and ſuch further knowledge as may enable him to underſtand and practiſe the duties of a Chriſtian in his ſtation. And moreover, that he the ſaid *C. D.* ſhall and will, at the end of the ſaid term of ſeven years, or other ſooner determination of theſe preſents, provide, allow, and deliver unto the ſaid apprentice, one new whole and complete ſuit of clothing, excluſive of the common working-dreſs and day-ſuit, with ſtockings and linen ſuitable thereto. And if at the expiration of

the

the ſaid term the ſaid apprentice ſhall not be minded to follow the trade or buſineſs of a chimney-ſweeper, or ſhall, from youth or bodily infirmity, be unfit to be truſted to himſelf, and have no parents or friends able and willing to receive and protect him, that in ſuch caſe, he the ſaid *C. D.* ſhall and will uſe his utmoſt endeavours to procure for the ſaid *A. B.* a maſter in the ſea-ſervice, or ſome other uſeful employment, and ſhall and will maintain the ſaid *A. B.* at his own expence for ſuch time, not exceeding over and after the expiration of the term aforeſaid, as he the ſaid *A. B.* ſhall be unprovided with employment. In witneſs whereof the ſaid parties to theſe preſents have hereunto interchangeably ſet their hands and ſeals, the day and year firſt above written.

Sealed, &c.

I hereby certify, that the within-written Indenture of apprentice-ſhip was regiſtered in my office, purſuant

purſuant to the act of parliament in that behalf, made and provided this day of 178 . Folio.

E. F. Chamberlain.

The ſame in any other office where the entry of the indenture may be made.

In ſupport of the teſtimony of cruelty to the Climbing-boys, chimney-ſweepers apprentices.

To JONAS HANWAY, *Eſq.*

SIR,

I HAVE read with attention your letters to the magiſtrates of London and Weſtminſter, in favour of the unfortunate children apprenticed to chimney-ſweepers. Permit me, Sir, to ſay, that ſuch letters,

whether conſidered in a political or moral view, do you more honour than if they had comprized the moſt elevated ſubjects in which humanity was leſs intereſted. Compaſſion for the diſtreſſes of our fellow-creatures, in whatever ſphere they are fated to move, is the firſt virtue in human nature: and the pleaſure of relieving them is ſufficiently known to benevolent minds. *That* pleaſure is the greater where it involves the general good; and it will be obvious to the public, that your endeavours to alleviate the calamities you ſo forcibly delineate, are adapted to promote the welfare of the community at large.

There is nothing fictitious, Sir, in the circumſtances you have repreſented. I have ſeen them ſubſtantiated in various inſtances. I remember a poor child's being beat by his maſter for crying, as he was about to aſcend the chimney he was ordered to clean. Compelled by the law of neceſſity, he obeyed the command, and the tyrant departed. On the boy's deſcent, I enquired into the cauſe of the reluctance for which he had been chaſtiſed.

chaſtiſed. With ſome difficulty he was perſuaded to remove the rags that tended to vellicate the excoriations of which he complained. Added to ſtripes, he was denied the ſuſtenance for which nature will combat ſo many diſaſtrous ſcenes, unleſs he diſcharged the taſks that were daily aſſigned him.

In the retroſpect of theſe circumſtances, it is not to be ſuppoſed improbable that he may have ſince fallen a victim to ſickneſs, or to depredations committed on the lives and fortunes of others. In either of theſe caſes, humanity muſt feel for his fate; and the general preſervation prove the neceſſity of the attention you have ſo judiciouſly recommended. To ſuch attention I truſt the guardians of the commonwealth will advert as it becomes them.

As the diſeaſes of the human fabric are only to be leſſened in the prevention of their cauſes; ſo thoſe of the community require a ſuppreſſion of the evils from which they are found to originate. The endeavours of the phyſician and the magiſtrate to

exterminate the reſpective maladies that ſolicit their care, will otherwiſe be equally in vain. The obſervance of temperance is not more eſſential to the health of the animal œconomy, than the moral regulations of ſociety are neceſſary for the welfare of the ſtate: In the omiſſion of either, the diſorders of which we complain will continue to occur. Hence the frequent occaſion for medical preſcription in human diſeaſes, and the numerous felonies and other miſdemeanors that demand the ſentence of the law.

But it is not, Sir, (permit me to add) at the preſent hour, that the writer is qualified to expatiate on a ſubject which merits the attention of more powerful advocates, and which is ſo much better handled by your own pen.

I am, with reſpectful deference,

SIR,

Your moſt obedient ſervant,

W. RENWICK.

ANSWER to Mr. RENWICK.

SIR,

THE letter which you have been pleaſed to addreſs to me, is a flattering teſtimony of your approbation of the principles which I have adopted; and, as it goes to your knowledge of facts, the ſatisfaction it affords is the greater. We may lament that the doctrine of true religion, and true politics, being the ſame, is not ſo univerſally inculcated, as to be deemed rebellion againſt the Majeſty of Heaven to talk any other language. The poſition is as obvious as that true ſelf-love and ſocial are the ſame. If, as you obſerve, moral efforts are not ſupported by political regulations, the cauſe of virtue is abandoned, and anarchy invited. — I underſtand that

you are in the medical line; your remark on the cruelty which you have ſeen, reſpecting a poor boy's wounds, carries with it the more force: it muſt ſhudder every being that wears in his breaſt the heart of a *man*; and I truſt will have its weight in obtaining the public regulations we are now ſeeking for.

I am, with much gratitude,

SIR,

Your moſt obedient

humble ſervant,

JONAS HANWAY.

Sunday

Sunday Schools for poor children eſſential to the inſtruction and the reform of the common people.

To JONAS HANWAY, *Eſq.*

SIR,

I HAVE of late received inexpreſſible ſatisfaction by the peruſal of your correſpondence, in behalf of a diſtreſſed part of our fellow-creatures. With you I feel for their ſufferings; actuated by your noble ambition, I could wiſh to meliorate their ſituation. Such is my motive in thus addreſſing you. I do not mean, Sir, to enter on the propriety of ſubjects, or modes of performance, which you have well conſidered; neither have I an idea of recommending any amendment to your general plan. I could wiſh, however, to engage

your patronage to a ſcheme — a ſcheme which ſeems well calculated to promote, in ſome degree, your preſent undertaking.

The ſubject, Sir, to which I here refer, is the introduction of Sunday Schools into the metropolis. I am well aware of the great difficulty which may attend this ſcheme; I have long thought of it, and have as often been diſcouraged by its arduous aſpect. However, it has to me the appearance of promiſing much in aid to your own plan; and permit me to ſay, that your name might prove of the utmoſt aſſiſtance in the promotion of ſo deſirable a purpoſe.

It were an inſult to your underſtanding to point out what ineſtimable benefits might be deduced to the public from ſimilar inſtitutions. Their good effect and tendency have been amply experienced in the towns of Glouceſter, Briſtol, Canterbury, &c. where they have already been eſtabliſhed. What then might be the conſequence, could it be effected in this ſink of univerſal diſſipation and vice!

To the world at large I would recommend

mend it as a ſcheme productive of real advantage; *for the well-being of ſociety depends in no ſmall degree on the virtue of its members.* But to you, Sir, I would obſerve what ſuperlative felicity, both here and hereafter, we might hence accumulate on a wretched ſet of individuals, who at preſent know not in what manner to acquire comfort in this world, or to enſure felicity in the next.

Excuſe the liberty I have taken in thus addreſſing you. Should any proſpect in future appear of accompliſhing this deſirable purpoſe, I ſhall be happy in ranking myſelf as one of your fellow-labourers.

I am, Sir,

Your's, &c.

A LONDON CLERGYMAN.

Anſwer

To a London Clergyman,

In praiſe of his propoſal for Sunday Schools for the children of the poor, and complaining of the danger of dropping pious and judicious old cuſtoms.

SIR,

I Return you my humble thanks for the honourable mention you make of my labours in the cauſe of humanity, and particularly for your improvement of my hint, in relation to *Sunday Schools* for poor children.

I would gladly contribute my mite towards promoting the pious and benevolent deſign which you ſo zealouſly and *judiciouſly* recommend to us. No one poſſeſſed of any means of being aſſiſtant, believing in a God, and conſidering religion as his primary

mary object, can ſurely refuſe his aid: but with regard to any active part, which I can conſiſtently engage to take, you are to conſider me as a ſtorm-beaten antient man, favoured by Heaven with a long life of inceſſant toil; and being at length tired, am inclined *to go to reſt*. You cannot, with any propriety, depend on me for any ſervice of this kind, except my ſincere and benevolent recommendation of ſo good a deſign. If you will do me the honour of a viſit, I ſhall be glad; and this may be coming nearer the marrow of the matter, than a correſpondence with a gentleman without a name.

In the mean while, as you ſeem to ſeek for my *opinion*, I muſt add, that where the greateſt number of people are aſſembled, there the virulency of moral diſeaſes rages moſt; but at the ſame time, I believe the ſuccour may be proportioned.

In the great towns, where you ſay the plan has taken place, there are *ten* or a dozen pariſhes: here we have near *one hundred and fifty*; but they are as much diſtin-

guiſhed as if they were but *five*. If a collection were made in any pariſh of note, under a good *patronage*, a *treaſurer* of reſponſibility being appointed, I apprehend you would ſoon get money enough; and the reſt would follow. The boys and the girls ſhould be under two different roofs; a maſter for the males, and a miſtreſs for the females; and if it extended to more days than the *Sabbath*, the expence could be no object. We are ſure that piety will promote induſtry, induſtry cleanlineſs; and the united force of both, whole and clean garments. Children, like grown perſons, muſt have ſome reſpect for themſelves, before they will ſhew any to God or their neighbour.

I apprehend that this is a work more peculiarly belonging to the clergymen of the reſpective pariſhes, being in effect calculated to make the *poor* children, *Chriſtians*. As to *laymen*, though all may not be active enough to take a part, who among them can form an idea of *oppoſition?* You ſubſcribe yourſelf *A London Clergyman*; and,

zealous

zealous you are as a citizen, and worthy as a *clergyman*, or you would not have made ſuch a propoſal. I conceive, that a moderate degree of addreſs, with ſtrong expreſſions of philanthropy, cannot fail of working on the native ingenuouſneſs of the infant mind, ſuppoſing that many children are already in a habit of wickedneſs. Flattered by the applauſe which the earlieſt propenſities to virtuous actions, diſcoverable in ſome children, entitle them to; and urged on by a generous emulation, you will ſoon make an impreſſion. By the ſublime doctrine of *Peace on earth, and good-will towards men*, theſe children will ſoon become what we may with propriety call *converts to Chriſtianity!* Some muſt be aſſiſted with books; others taught to read: they will all learn to repeat the *Belief*, the *Lord's Prayer*, and the *Commandments*. If they are taught to venerate theſe inſtruments as tributary to the fear of that God, who is their Father and their Friend, who will make them happy, — can you doubt of the effect? If at the ſame time you take

public

public notice of the children, when they appear at the public worſhip, and hear your diſcourſes, occaſionally applied to them, it will help on your deſign: it will increaſe the number of your advocates: it will mend the adults: your ſubſcription will increaſe: the example will ſpread, and you will ſee all the good effects which you promiſe yourſelf. The happy change of cuſtom, reſpecting the Sabbath-day, may be a prelude to their good living through all the days of their life. Greater things have been done from ſmaller beginnings.

Your offer to do the good, is a proof of your goodneſs, and will eventually bring the deſign to a happy iſſue; and this, as well as many other good works, I apprehend depends on the *clergy*, as the only *permanent* reſource. It is the misfortune of our times, that the colder the *laity* become, the leſs zealous the *clergy* are induced to be; but it ought in reaſon to have a contrary effect; for coldneſs in the cauſe of piety, acting reciprocally, numbs thoſe powers, which a moderate degree of energy, with

with a ſincere faith, might call forth. None of us can be inſenſible that ſomething is wanting to collect our ſcattered powers.

It is more eaſy to conceive than deſcribe the impreſſions which we receive in our childhood; they are hardly ever totally worn out. I recollect the ſentiments which I firſt received, of reſpect for your profeſſion, and the perſons of clergymen: theſe have been improved by time, and comprehend gratitude and affection; for, in proportion as religion is of the higheſt importance to mankind, and your *order* benefactors of the firſt claſs and dignity, every man of ſentiment muſt be anxious for the ſupport of your honour and character. You will give me leave, on this occaſion, to mention, that I have paſſed many years of my life in ſeveral countries of *Europe*, and ſome of my time in *Aſia*. I have everywhere found their prieſts diſtinguiſhed by their *dreſs* in *common* uſe. Religion being ſo natural to the ſoul of man, they were reſpected accordingly, whether *Papiſt* or *Calviniſt*,

Calviniſt, *Lutheran* or *Greek*, *Jews*, *Mahometans*, or *Pagans*, the *Anglican churchmen* only excepted: This, I apprehend, has proved hurtful to us! Since the majority of your body threw away their *diſtinguiſhed beaver and band*, *clergymen* have appeared as *laymen*. The remembrance of the canonical diſtinction is ſtrong upon my mind. Such impreſſions cannot be ſuppoſed to be received by perſons who are too young to remember the diſtinction, but the *effect of its being deſtroyed is the ſame*. It would be injurious to imagine that any *clergyman* ſecretly wiſhes to appear as a *layman*, as if he had little or no honour for his profeſſion: I believe, the majority take up the *layman's hat* as an *indifferent cuſtom*: but is it in the nature of things, that diſtinctions in appearance can be *indifferent*? To me it appears, that a conſiderable portion of that influence, which you might have on the minds of the laity, is by this means loſt. When forms and external modes, by the force of capricious refine-

ments,

ments, or inconſtancy of temper, ceaſe to be treated with reſpect, the benefits intended by the wiſdom and experience of our anceſtors are totally obliterated. This opinion ſeems to be realized in your perſons; for much of that humble ſimplicity, which might be diſcovered among the inferior claſſes of the people, now appears to be loſt, eſpecially in theſe vaſt cities; and conſequently the work which you have at heart may be the leſs eaſy. Happy might it be, if this were the only ſink of iniquity; but it appears, that in the proportion of one perſon who, forty years ſince, fell a victim to public juſtice, in the provinces of this realm, twenty are now offered. Various cauſes may have contributed to ſo fatal an effect; but if external diſtinctions are delivered up, to be the ſport of time, and are offered at the altars of cuſtom and capricious humour: if in common life no *external* mark remains that any *order* of men is the guardian of the laws of heaven, the rod of the magiſtrate will hardly avail as a collateral ſecurity;

for he alſo appearing without diſtinction, and conſequently without creating any awe, we loſe the effect; and all fear of puniſhment in both worlds is ſo far removed.

By refining away our common ſenſe, we loſe our virtue: We differ from ourſelves, and from the reſt of the world, and are plunged into a labyrinth of difficulties, beyond any other nation. As to any *good* that comes of ſuch a conduct, it would be difficult to trace it out: the *evil* is apparent. Under a notion of being wiſer than other nations, we are, in this inſtance, more fooliſh; and if our legiſlators and *clergy* do not ſet us right, what is to be the end thereof!

There is another circumſtance, in which I conceive ſome of you overlook your intereſt: Can a clergyman ſpend an hour, and ſometimes two hours, in adjuſting, with an elaborate exactneſs, every ſingle hair on his head? However decent it may be to give nature ſome aſſiſtance, and pay a certain reſpect to common cuſtom, whatever goes to exceſs, in a moral view, muſt be

be offenſive. So much vigilance in the cure of diſtempered ſouls; ſo much ſimplicity in the imitation of apoſtolical purity is neceſſary, that abſtracted from the extravagancy of the *coſt*, the practice muſt appear to every ſerious man unworthy. I am confident, that you who have conceived ſo proper an intention in reſpect to the children of the poor, cannot vindicate a cuſtom which ſeems better calculated to cheriſh pride, than to ſpread the influences of the goſpel among the "wretched band of "individuals, who at preſent know not in "what manner to acquire comfort in this "world, or to enſure felicity in the next:" for ſuch, as you truly obſerve, there are in vaſt numbers.

You will eaſily conclude that I do not mean to recommend any thing ſordid in attire. The raiment which is rather above than below a man's fortune, beſpeaks his virtue and knowledge of the world, and ſupports thoſe diſtinctions among men, which are neceſſary to ſubordination and government. The common excuſe — "I

" conform to the cuſtom that prevails, that " I may not appear ſingular," is ſaying in effect, " It is more my intereſt, with reſpect " to both worlds, to comply with the " fancy and caprice of this world, than to " exerciſe my reaſon, though that exerciſe " is confeſſedly the glory of a man."

An *obſtinate* reſiſtance of an indifferent cuſtom, may in ſome caſes rather afford proof of pride than humility: but the firſt conſideration is the moral tendency of actions; the next, the mode in which we may militate againſt the prevalency of bad cuſtoms.

We are all apt to maintain an opinion of *ſelf-importance*, which, on a nicer ſcrutiny, is a vain conceit; for whether a man deviates from a cuſtom or complies with it, like many other events, it paſſes away like a cloud that overſhadows the earth. The wonder is, that men ſhould fear that their conduct will be wonderful, becauſe it is *reaſonable*. Almoſt every excuſe of this kind is founded on a principle of falſe timidity; but the evils created to

ſociety

ſociety by a deviation from reaſon, are permanent. Many ſuffer, from an apprehenſion of ſuffering. If they follow the dictates of fancy, in preference to thoſe of the underſtanding, they may be induced to believe they ſhall injure none except themſelves; but the example is deadly: they offer incenſe to an inferior power, inſtead of paying homage to the *true God*. He who gave reaſon to be the guide of life, certainly intended we ſhould exerciſe the higher faculties in preference to the lower, and conſequently obey our *judgment*, not our *fancy*. Do you imagine, Sir, if you enter ſeriouſly into the inveſtigation of the change which we are ſuppoſing to be productive of conſiderable good, that you ſhall have no advocate; that you ſhall have no follower or aſſociate; that the underſtanding of no man will prevail over the abſurdities of *cuſtom*; and that you ſhall not be able to maintain your ground?——How do the graver part of the clergy ſtand in eſtimation, who do not comply with fantaſtical cuſtoms? Is not the empire of vir-

tue ſtill ſupported, though not in its full ſplendor?

The great Apoſtle, who ſays he was *all things to all men, that he might win ſome*, does not ſay that he complied with any fantaſtical cuſtom; but rather that he found the gentle arts of perſuaſion generally carried with them ſo reſiſtleſs a force, that men of ingenuous minds, or thoſe whoſe hearts were open to conviction, believed: ſuch as, from the ſuperiority of their underſtanding, diſcerned the force of his arguments, became his *converts*.

Human nature is the ſame; and the ſame cauſes will generally produce the ſame effects; but there is one diſtinguiſhed feature in our divine religion, which baffles all the forces of human *folly*, and eclipſes all the powers of the prince of this world: it is this, *We are not permitted to do evil, that good may come of it*. We are forbidden to take the reins of government out of the hands of Heaven.

Be well aſſured, Sir, that, for the ſame reaſon that you might be *ſingular*, as the beginner

beginner of one good work, you might be able to do another. If you were to appear only in the hat of ſacerdotal dignity, you would act the more conſiſtent part, and become the better qualified to carry through the work you propoſe, ſimply by a modeſt diſtinction, which would ſpeak this language: "You may judge from "my dreſs and *appearance*, that I am a "teacher of the goſpel of Chriſt, and con- "ſequently am acting in character in my "endeavours to recover you from the error "of your ways."

This, Sir, I leave to your conſideration, confident as I am that you will find your work ſo much the more eaſy, as you purſue the moſt conſiſtent plan in the execution of it. Nothing can be more obvious than the accordance of your deſign with the ends of religion, and conſequently the great duties of Chriſtianity. Whether it regards the *church* or *ſtate*, the *clergy* or the *laity*, I apprehend, we ſhall be all under one common malediction, if we do not make proper exertions: the peculiar neceſſity of the

times we live in calls for them. To ſuccour thoſe who are in diſtreſs, for want of ſpiritual aid; to guard the child from the powers of darkneſs in its ſtate of innocence; to ſpread the influence of the goſpel among the poor, are ſurely imperial works, and worthy the immediate diſciples of our Lord. Nor are *they* only concerned: if the miniſter of ſtate looks on with a cold indifference, he is a narrow-minded and unworthy *ſtateſman*. To attempt to govern a nation without the aid of religion, is rebellion againſt the Sovereign of the univerſe! Whether in the moral, or the natural world, if the plant is not kept ſtraight, by props brought from the ſtores of human experience, it will be twiſted by every blaſt from the ſkies, and may grow into monſtrous forms, over-ſhadowing the earth with horrors! Inſtead of diffuſing rays of glory round the heads of our rulers, both in church and ſtate, we ſhould behold the ravages which *ignorance* and *impiety* ſpread over the face of the earth.

Theſe

Theſe are *figures*; but they do not apply the leſs to the underſtanding. Who is to be reſponſible for the calamities which careleſſneſs brings on a riſing generation? If we are blinded with the filth of iniquity, we muſt live in danger of ſtumbling into perdition. Time will record the evil; but the political diſſolution will not be the more remote.

The *mercies* of Heaven are infinite, and paſt finding out; but the wiſdom and the juſtice of the great Ruler of the earth are not leſs awful; and hiſtory, the faithful monitor of men, inſtructs us what we ought to do to avoid thoſe events, which have changed the very name and properties of nations, and delivered their lands to ſtrangers! If we read the Scriptures, and teach our children to read them, they will learn that there is a God that governs the world!

Certain it is, that by our preſent conduct, human nature is doubly diſgraced; firſt by thoſe who wander in darkneſs, and are a reproach to every idea of moral excel-

lency;

lency; and next, by thoſe who are idle ſpectators of ſuch diſgrace. We have ſtill much to hope for, as well as much to fear. The generous remains of the ferocity of our anceſtors, in their rudeſt ſtate, inclines us much to extremes.

Being fond of novelty, let us invite the return of the golden age. It is generally apprehended, that enthuſiaſtic virtue is a contradiction in terms; in our preſent temper, there is but little cauſe to fear it. We know that there is a paſſionate warmth which actuates the nobleſt faculties of the ſoul, whether in *affection* or *friendſhip*, in the love of arts, or attention to the duties of ſocial life: valour in war, and piety in religion, partake of it; and when it leans to the virtuous ſide, it conſtitutes a character of the moſt ſplendid kind. Our great object is to avoid the *extremes* in *vanity* and *folly*, leſt with a falſe taſte in the purſuit of pleaſure, we ſhould act as if we were ſent into the world to *baniſh* thought, inſtead of exerciſing the ſoul in

ſuch benignant enterprizes as fit and prepare it for the bliſs of angels.

From whatever cauſes our infirmities ariſe, being conſcious that they are infirmities, we cannot be too aſſiduous in guarding ourſelves againſt them. We are all convinced, from daily experience, that, in proportion as the mind is occupied in *little things*, it will be diverted from *great ones*; and of all little things, the leaſt ſeems to be a fondneſs in the great majority of our youthful clergymen, to appear externally *unlike clergyman*. Exterior appearances among men, have a great affinity with their caſt of thought, and their obſervance of the duties of life; and it raiſes or ſinks them in heir own eſteem.

To apply theſe remarks to the influence of the clergy on the objects which you have immediately at heart, a teacher of the goſpel of Chriſt appearing in character as ſuch, and ſpeaking the perſuaſive language of *Chriſtian* precepts, cannot fail of making a deep impreſſion. The thoughts of children are tender; they have a native

love

love of truth; their hopes of ſome diſtant good, and fears of diſtant evils, influence their minds as the operations of reaſon in adults; with this difference, that, like wax, they receive any impreſſion.—Of what vaſt importance is it then, to make that impreſſion tend to their preſent and future happineſs!

It is not a queſtion, if the idea of the exiſtence of a God be intuitive, or acquired by ſocial intercourſe, ſince he who has made us, has placed us in a *ſocial ſtate*; and, when we conſider how admirably things are connected, we ſhall be enamoured with the harmony which flows from *ſocial life*, and diſcharge the duties of it. Habits of a different nature equally prove, that ſociety may be rent and torn, as if *man were in a ſtate of war with man*, as ſome infidel writers repreſent.

Is it in the nature of things, that a genuine Chriſtian prieſthood ſuch as ours, ſo perfectly informed, ſo deeply read in the theory of life and manners, can avoid ſeeing the neceſſity of ſupporting the *exterior*

diſtinction of their profeſſion? Would any thing tend more to ſuperinduce a gravity of deportment, ſuch as may incline the *laity* to be the more deeply and conſtantly convinced that religion is their firſt and moſt ſerious object? Common ſenſe muſt ever lead the people to perceive, that though religion, and the teachers of it, are diſtinct objects; yet, ſo far as the ſenſes of mankind lead them, their ideas of the teacher and the thing taught, will be confounded. Men of ſtudy and reflection find that there is in our native complexion a propenſity to *extremes*, and that even learning miſapplied, introduces refinements which trample down the fences that guard the purity and ſimplicity of our religion.

I am pleading, Sir, for good old well-meaning ſignificant cuſtoms, in preference to new ones, which ſeem to have no meaning, or a bad one. From want of reſpect for miniſters of the goſpel, the tranſition is eaſy to a diſregard of the goſpel itſelf: and how are we to honour the perſons of our clergy, if we cannot

not diſtinguiſh them from *laymen* in *half-mourning?*

You wiſh to ſee the poor childen in the ſtreets taught their duty to God, and delivered from the horrible impieties which they learn, even in their infancy; and you flatter yourſelf with the hope, that this may be done by the *countenance of a layman*; and, according to your opinion of his zeal and underſtanding, we may give you credit for your opinion, though it ſhould be erroneous. But, if you conſider the ſuperior knowledge and dignity of your own ſacred function, which can in no inſtance be more aptly applied, you will diſcover ſomething that pleads much ſtronger for your line of official duty to ſuperintend ſuch a work. With reſpect to the influence neceſſary to accompliſh your purſuit, whether by *clergymen* or *laymen*, the rich, and thoſe who are flouriſhing in the ſpring or ſummer of life, are equally concerned in the great buſineſs in queſtion; otherwiſe you might, in the laſt reſort, appeal to the antient, and thoſe who are on the verge of eternity! I cannot

not help obſerving on this occaſion, that the clergy have a moſt favourable opportunity of reverting to the honourable antient diſtinction which their office entitles them to. If they appear in their proper character, it is not to be conceived but that their intereſt will increaſe, both with the great and little vulgar. By doing themſelves juſtice in ſo material an article, they will neceſſarily be the more *honoured*. As the caſe ſtands, the features of every one who goes into *orders* cannot be known. Even in his own pariſh, in theſe vaſt cities, the perſon of the miniſter is not familiar to a quarter part of his pariſhioners; and it would be ridiculous to ſuppoſe that any gravity of deportment could proclaim, "I "am a teacher of the goſpel!"

I have often obſerved, with much ſatiſfaction, during the many years I lived in *Portugal*, that where a common ſoldier has interpoſed in the quarrels of people in the ſtreets, his livery, however mean and tarniſhed it might be, gave him a title, in their eſteem, to *Senhor Soldado*: he became

of

of conſequence, becauſe he appeared in character, though his pay was very mean. In all *military* governments, according to my obſervation, military men are generally confined to their regimentals. I have known *our admirals* refuſe admittance to the officers under their command, when they have not appeared in their uniform; eſteeming it a neceſſary part of diſcipline.

Under all governments, except ours, the *clergy* in particular, maintain their dignity, by appearing diſtinguiſhed as ſuch. The ſervice of God is the only *perfect liberty*; and his immediate ſervants might be the more tenacious of their diſtinction in a country, where ſomething the neareſt to it may be found. Your *order* is conſidered as by a beautiful figure you are aptly called, *ſoldiers*, ſerving faithfully under the great Captain of our ſalvation; not all ſuitably provided for as ſuch, becauſe men uſually think more of a temporal than a ſpiritual warfare, and are more attached to this little

fleeting

fleeting ſcene, than to the vaſt concerns of *eternity!* To judge from the experience which the world furniſhes, your proviſion would increaſe with your zeal: I am ſure it ought to do ſo: We naturally love thoſe who appear to love us: and what greater love can a man ſhew to his neighbour, than by the care he takes of his eternal welfare?

Not to drop my ſubject, as if I had very little meaning, I beg leave to tell you, that I ſometimes meet a *clergyman* in the ſtreet, in his lay-habit, upon ſolemn duty, at the head of the proceſſion of a funeral. To obſerve him in his ſecular ſmart-cocked hat, undiſtinguiſhed by any one clerical token, while the mourners have their *inky* cloaks and faces covered, excites in my breaſt an idea of ſorrow mixed with diſdain, as an event which depreciates the dignity of your *ſacred order*. If the ſupreme magiſtrate in his ſecular duty, were to throw away his robes, and other enſigns of royalty, and appear in a hunting-frock and a ſcratch-wig, with the hair of it over his eye-brows, though his authority ſhould have the ſame

force on men of ſuperior education, would it not be dangerous to admit the vulgar to the ſight? — How ſtands the caſe in the great concerns of religious impreſſions?

Whether the preſent cuſtom of your appearance as miniſters of the goſpel, originated in the inſolence of ſome of the ruder ſons of liberty miſunderſtood; in any remarkable defect in the conduct of any clergymen, or the combined force of both, ſeems to be a queſtion of more curioſity than uſe, eſpecially as it might ſerve only to leſſen ourſelves in our own eſteem.

In the laſt century, affected ſanctity and hypocritical appeals to Heaven, brought the clergy into contempt: we muſt now guard againſt levity and a ſupercilious diſdain of forms and modes of diſtinction. We are not, in ſuch a ſtate of madneſs, that you have any thing to fear from appearing in your *proper character*. Thoſe who are in their right minds, will be the ſtronger in numbers, and in ſound principles: and the moſt profligate will be afraid to utter a word againſt you: Nothing leſs than

inſanity could excite them to inſult you, and nothing would be more reprehenſible by a magiſtrate.

A proper regard of the clergy for themſelves, is the readieſt way to render the laity attentive to what they ſay. — Your concern for children could never excite any reſentment in the breaſt of a parent, or any other man fit to be truſted with the freedom of his own perſon. You can never appear in ſo honourable a light as the immediate diſciples of our Lord: and if as ſuch, you deſire to go about doing good, I cannot avoid expreſſing my wiſhes, that you ſhould enjoy every advantage that reaſon and experience can afford. I have often wondered that the dignitaries of the church have not interpoſed their admonitions, or employed the arts of perſuaſion to ſtop the progreſs of a cuſtom, pregnant with no good, and which can ſerve no other end than to bring clergymen down to a lower level. Some are more inclined to decorate the head externally, with an elaborate exactneſs, than to preſerve the diſtinction of their profeſſion;

but while the canonical-hat, the roſe, the band, and ſuch marks of dignity, yield up their place, as if they had no ſhare in the fortunes of churchmen in either world, you will loſe ground. Whatever youthful thoughts may ſuggeſt to ſome, *preferment* can never ariſe from ſuch a cauſe; it never can cheriſh grace, nor promiſe glory in either world!

Nothing which affects your eſtimation with the vulgar, can be *indifferent*; nor is it in the nature of things that you can gratify one fanciful infirmity, without its leading to another. On the contrary, as your conduct is regulated by the laws of reaſon, you will acquire an aſcendancy, and put yourſelves in a condition of *doing the good* which you mean to do, not in the caſe of the *infant-mind* only, but with thoſe among us laymen, who are accompliſhed in wickedneſs, and ſtand in the utmoſt need of all the aſſiſtance which our moſt learned, pious, zealous prieſthood can give, to ſave us from perdition!

Allowing for human infirmities, you might

might appear as emiſſaries from heaven; angels of comfort; reſtorers of peace, to the ſouls of men! Many of our clergy ſtand on this ground, and are moſt indubitably the firſt of benefactors to their fellow-ſubjects and fellow-creatures!

You bid us, as you are required, to be *ſober* and *vigilant*, and aſſign a very good and true reaſon for it, that the prince of darkneſs, like a lion, ſeeks whom he can devour. *Example* operating with *precept*, particularly in that which is the object of our ſenſes, promiſes a more happy event than the precept only. Without any affectation of ſanctity, the clergy might do more to gain us over to our nobleſt intereſt, and ſeek that felicity which you juſtly ſay, "the "moſt wretched amongſt us are ſtrangers "to; learning neither how to live, nor "how to die." Happy might it be, if this deſcription comprehended only thoſe who are vulgarly underſtood to be *the moſt wretched*, and ſuch as err from ignorance, as well as prophaneſs: but if we ſcrutinize the times, and examine the conduct of

thouſands and tens of thouſands of ſuperior education, I fear we ſhall find them to be lovers of pleaſure, not riſing higher than animal gratifications, or mere amuſement, rather than lovers of God, and attentive to the vaſt concerns of an *immortal ſtate!* We believe in that ſtate,—and act as if we did not believe in it. Enraptured, for the hour, with the gay appendages and ſplendid ornaments which modern improvements in arts have introduced, or the vanity of the heart has ſuggeſted to be inſtruments of happineſs, we think more of being *heirs* to ſuch things, than of heirdom to the glories of that immortality!

What a taſk have the clergy to perform, to convince us *laymen* of our deluſion, and the errors of our ways! As men abandon bad and fooliſh practices, they generally acquire good and wiſe habits: and as *reſolution* and firmneſs of mind increaſe, the power of doing good to ourſelves and others augments. I am not invading your province when, as a moraliſt conſcious of my own offences, I reaſon from obſervation

concerning

concerning the neceſſity of being indefatigable in recommending a return to ſuch *old cuſtoms* as may increaſe our common intereſt and felicity.

As men wiſh for the kingdom of God in their hearts, it is to be hoped they will find it; but as our times are circumſtanced, the aſſiſtance of the clergy was never more neceſſary: and the meaſure of the neceſſity can be diſcoverable only on the trial. Thoſe calm philoſophers who gravely tell the world, that it muſt not expect *too much*, do in effect leave things at a hazard, as if *very little were expected*, by God or men. As to comparative views of *times*, of what uſe are they? The ſimple queſtion is, are we *deficient*, and do we not ſee and *feel* the ruinous effects of that deficiency?

Stateſmen and *philoſophers* may reaſon as they pleaſe: if the precepts of Chriſtianity are of divine original, the teachers of them are the depoſitaries, and they have the *faith* and the *reaſon* of man on their ſide. Every circumſtance combines in evidence, of the

conſiſtency and neceſſity of purſuing *your* pious *wiſhes*; I hope I may call them *reſo-intentions*.

Take us in the aggregate, and though it would be ſevere to ſay we live *without God in the world*, we can hardly determine in general, that we live *with him!* And ſince I have thus boldly gratified the zeal with which you have inſpired me, will you give me leave to aſk, if *family-prayer* is not the trueſt ſource of domeſtic piety; and if you find it among the great majority of the families of the opulent, or even of the ſober part of us in common life? And how are the common people, who compoſe a large part of great families, to be kept in mind of religious duties, unleſs they have a call of this kind?

Let the clergy perſiſt in preaching on the neceſſity of a duty, eſſential to the *ſpiritual life* of man, as is that part of our religion, which in general the common people do not underſtand; I mean, the ſacrament of our Lord's ſupper, which might be rendered familiar to thouſands, who have no comprehenſion

henſion of it as an *indiſpenſible duty*. They indulge a *falſe fear*, to the *extinction* of *true hope*, as founded in this act of *obedience*, of remembering their Redeemer! Can we wonder at their lives being ſo diſſolute, when the greateſt check is ſo much laid aſide, or removed? And how are their prejudices to be overcome, unleſs you employ the force of *your* labours?

In the mean while, are not many ſeized with fear, that if they go out of the beaten path, and make exertions with energy, in the pulpit, and out of it, they ſhall be ſuſpected of adopting falſe principles? I believe this is frequently our melancholy caſe; though to ſuppoſe a man to err in doctrine, becauſe he is uncommonly zealous, with reſpect to any religious duty of indiſpenſible authority, and as the means of maintaining a Chriſtian life, ſeems to be no leſs than betraying both reaſon and religion: it is one of thoſe abſurdities which confounds all diſtinctions. Not to act as Chriſtians in reſpect to an eſſential obligation, can be reconciled only by

by the conſideration of a timid, or unmanly turn of mind, as remote from the true ſpirit of *Chriſtianity*, as inconſiſtent with *hope*, under any *faith* or any *reaſon* in the breaſt of man. Where we have not reſolution to do right, we muſt neceſſarily do wrong: there is no paſſive ſtate of indifference. If we yield up our greateſt intereſt to the gratification of a prevailing humour, indolence and diſſipation will ſucceed: we ſhall give a preference to that which amuſes for the *preſent* moment, and leave the *future* totally unprovided for.

Such I take to be the quality of our preſent rage for *amuſements*, that the heart is much oftener polluted, than the underſtanding improved! As to private *domeſtic devotion*, the neglect of it is the great ſource of the evil; it proves as if we thought it had no properties to keep us within bounds; or that to be ſo kept, is a matter of no moment to an intelligent accountable being!

Another old cuſtom is treated very uncivilly: we oftener pray for our daily bread,

bread, than we thank God for it when he gives it us. Saying *grace*, conſidered as a religious duty, ſo congruous with common ſenſe and reaſon, is treated as if it were fit only for the vulgar, and rarely attended to by them with any ſerioufneſs.

You muſt be ſenſible, Sir, that a ſkilful general thinks of the ſmall, as well as the grand detail of war, and provides for the common neceſſaries of animal life, or he would ſoon be without an army to fight with. Common ſenſe leads us likewiſe to think, that ſo it muſt be in our ſpiritual warfare, reſpecting duties ſignificant in themſelves, and of ſo direct a tendency to promote piety.

Nothing is more evident, than that ſuch *cuſtoms* are really religious duties; they are a part of the ſyſtem, and eſſential to our happineſs. If we do not meaſure our happineſs by cheriſhing the *thought* of what *may*, and of what *muſt be*, but by the diſſipation of it, as if we were butterflies, or creatures of a day only, what will be the end?

How

How does the bent of our modern amuſements promote a firm and maſculine turn of thought? There are ſome intermixed with noble principles, which might be incorporated into the ſyſtem of our lives; but theſe are balanced by others, and a ridiculous intercourſe, called *viſitings*, without meaning, and deeds of diſſipation without end. I believe you will readily grant, that, for a nation aſpiring at manlineſs, in the general tenor of her purſuits, we lean too much to the puerile ſide.

What think you of the *good old cuſtom of worſhipping God twice on the Sabbath-day?* We now ſay, it interferes with our *dinner:* it does not ſuit with our *amuſement:* thus we ſhew the moſt pernicious example, and then wonder at the effect. It is by deeds of ſenſe, and faith, and purity of doctrine, by which we may poſſibly go to the root of our immoral diſorders.

The effort which you now recommend, is a proof that we ought not by any means to deſpair. It is generally ſuppoſed, that the right end to begin is youth; but it

ſhould be, more particularly, youth born lawgivers, and leaders of mankind: but the inſtruction of children undiſciplined and roving in our ſtreets, or ſuch as are in the hands of parents who have little or no religion, is in effect *preaching the goſpel to the poor*, and conſequently a ſervice of high importance, at all times, and indiſputably ſo at this. It is not carrying them into the fields to hear the rants of enthuſiaſts, but giving them gentle inſtruction; and, by the ſoothing arts of parental love, rendering ſuch inſtruction, which is the *foundation* of all moral and political government, the *baſis* of our happineſs. I therefore hope, that nothing which I have ſaid, will induce you to believe that I am influenced by any motives, either cynical or capricious. I know too much of my own ſins and infirmities, not to make very large allowances for thoſe of other men, whatever their profeſſion may be, or whatever their various duties may call on them to perform. But I ſtill revert to this doctrine, that philoſophers, as well as divines, muſt draw their ſhafts againſt cuſ-

toms

toms of an immoral tendency, before they can make any deep impreſſion on the *great* or *little* vulgar.

The moſt ſimple truths, and the moſt eaſy to underſtand, are the moſt important. If you take up your object ſimply and independently of any of the *cuſtoms* I have mentioned, I believe you will ſucceed, but not ſo radically or effectually. Reſolve at leaſt to make your appearance before your *children in God*, in the moſt amiable light, and as ſuppoſing that their reaſonable obedience will co-operate with your efforts.

The ſounding tones of war, and the embarraſſments created by it; the convulſions of the mind occaſioned by exceſs; and our eagerneſs to obtain the means of gratifying it, have made ſuch impreſſions, that the ſmall calm voice of reaſon and religion cannot be eaſily heard; we ſhould otherwiſe be more ſenſible of our *diſtreſs*. The name of religion or liberty cannot ſecure us; but the violations of them may baffle the efforts of the legiſlator and the magiſtrate in ſuch a manner, that if we do

not apply our ſtrength to the *riſing generation by the power of religion*, we ſhall hazard our being involved in *anarchy*, much ſooner than is vulgarly imagined. *Inſtruction* only can prevent that devaſtation of morals which accelerates the political decay of a nation, of which we every day ſee the moſt convincing proofs. From the imperfection of all earthly things, the natural body is born with the ſeeds of its own diſſolution; ſo it is in the political conſtitution: but it is no leſs true, that righteouſneſs gives it the more permanent eſtabliſhment. This effect evidently ariſes from the order of divine government, if not from the intervention of that particular providence which is beyond our diſcovery.

In what a wretched condition is that country, the outrages of a great part of whoſe people have reached to ſuch a height, that ſhe has not the means of puniſhing them! The *ſad neglect* of preparing proper priſons for labour in *ſolitude*, attended with ſuitable religious inſtruction, involves us in a labyrinth of difficulties. The number of

convicts

convicts in the priſons of this kingdom, mixed together as in a ſeminary of tuition, every day becoming more abominably corrupt, confounds the underſtanding; nor does the heart bleed leſs for the great numbers executed!

Whatever temporary expedients *neceſſity* may ſuggeſt, neither executions nor tranſportations amount to a radical cure of the evil: we muſt appeal to the primary cauſe of moral rectitude, in moral and accountable agents. What can avail ſo well as *inſtruction* to the riſing generation, of which your plan conſtitutes an eſſential part? If we exert ourſelves, we may hope that the great Governor of the earth will not caſt us off!—So long as we endeavour to breed up a race of men to worſhip him in ſpirit and in truth, we may hope for *good*, and no longer. Aſk the generality of maſters in trades, mechanic arts, and manufactures; whether they take care that their apprentices pray, as they were wont to do in hoſpitals or ſchools, or, as we vulgarly term it, if they ſay their prayers conſtantly

ſtantly morning and night; they look at you as if you aſked the queſtion-impertinent. But how are our youth bred, if they live without offering their homage to their God? How is any religious effect to be produced without *practice*, ſupported by *inſtruction*? *Inſtruction* is the baſis of the moral government on which alone a nation can ſtand firm: our neglect, in its due latitude, is one proof of our capital deficiency. — The Almighty is not ſpeedy to execute his vengeance on offending man: the diſpenſations of his providence, we may obſerve, are often ſlow in our puniſhments, as if they were acts of mercy, to bring us to repentance. But where is it found in the hiſtory of mankind, that a nation become extremely wicked exiſted long, without ſuffering in a national capacity? Have we not ſeen ourſelves on the verge of being overwhelmed by a hoſt of foes? We are, at this time, called upon to be on our guard, that we do not overwhelm ourſelves! Numbers of us are in the greateſt need of a

 check:

check: Inattention to our duties, in our reſpective conditions, is become an evil that gives us very juſt grounds for fear, unleſs we mend our manners. Our attention to the riſing generation of the labouring poor, will give the ſtrongeſt evidence of our ſincerity in the ſight of God: as it comprehends the moſt exalted charity, it is ſurely one of the greateſt ſervices we can render our country: therefore, Sir, I hope you will act up to your own principle, and engage your *order* in a purſuit which will do them honour, and be no leſs profitable in the event, with reſpect to both worlds.

Your propoſal cannot be received as a ſubject of doubtful ſpeculation: it comprehends the ſpirit and eſſence of our religion, being replete with the moſt joyful hope. The diſcoveries made by the goſpel are level to the comprehenſion of the children of the poor, upon the great principle of the mercies of God, from generation to generation, to thoſe who obey his commandments; nor are they leſs eſſential to thoſe who are born lawgivers, or educated in

the deepeſt erudition. However ſome may fooliſhly flatter themſelves, *experience*, the ſteady guide of life, proves that diligence, caution, and ſincerity of heart, are abſolute requiſites for acquiring that meaſure of divine aſſiſtance which the goſpel promiſes; and that conſolation, in the tremendous proſpect of a life to come, for which the ſoul of man ſo naturally longs!

Among the little tracts which you may ſelect for the *hiſtorical* part, and remarks on the great events of the ſacred hiſtory, the Rev. Mr. *Sellon*'s Abridgment of the Scriptures preſents itſelf, as ſuited to children, and yet manly and ſtrong in ſenſe.

It appears to me, in the moſt ſtriking point of view, that the preachers of the goſpel cannot more effectually imitate the great Founder of our religion, than by entering cordially into the ſpirit and ſubſtance of your deſign; it being confeſſed, that crowds of accountable beings, not objects of the parochial attention, have

parents ſo poor, ignorant, or profligate, that their children are left in the ſtate of the wild aſs's colt. Nor can it be preſumed that the *clergy* ever forget the conduct of their Maſter, who admitted *little children* into his arms, and recommended them to the protection of Heaven. He taught his *diſciples* to treat them with a peculiar tenderneſs; and inculcated the leſſon with the care of a parent, and the kindneſs of a friend. Even he, who now ſits at the right hand of the Moſt High, will ſurely accept this offering: he will not reject the performance of a deſign of ſuch extenſive benevolence: he will receive it as one of the moſt glorious ſervices which you can render the cauſe, for which the Saviour of the world came down from the boſom of his Father! From the conſideration of *his* example, it ſurely cannot be below the dignity of the moſt exalted character; and whatever your condition may be, the generoſity of your propoſal muſt be worthy of you.

The mutual love and affectionate concern for the happineſs of others, comprehended in Chriſtianity, is ſo congenial to the ſoul, and ſuch a ſource of peace, ſecurity, and joy, as muſt captivate the tender hearts of children. Though you ſhould find the minds of ſome young perſons already warped, your efforts will ſtraiten them again. Happy would it be, if modern education, in general, were calculated to render children more humble and attentive to the important truths which you mean to recommend to the poor.

Solicit the *contributions* of your pariſhioners, and ſeek for proper perſons to inſtruct the children. The great object will be, to employ only ſuch maſters and miſtreſſes as are capable and willing, though they ſhould be paid the beſt price that ſuch a duty may entitle them to. Your eye pervading their conduct, will at once countenance and keep them to their duty: the parochial-officers will feel the benefit by the induſtry that will follow. If you are acquainted with

the method of proceeding in other cities, you may improve upon it, and accompliſh the work in your own pariſh. Collect the ore in its rudeſt ſtate; ſome of it will refine into gold. Though it may appear a *Herculean labour*, from the practices of many being apparently againſt ſuch efforts, it cannot be upon a principle of *infidelity*, ſo much as a cuſtom of careleſſneſs; as if they underſtood nothing but the awful threats of divine vengeance, to rouze them from their lethargy of ſin.

Reaſoning from *fear* only, is betraying reaſon: *Hope for the beſt:* There is ſtill remaining much virtue, if it were called forth. Truſt to the majeſty of *truth*, as its awful powers extend to *religion*, theſe never failing to ſhew themſelves in a manner beyond what is generally conceived. Without any proſtitution of your dignity, you may find it neceſſary to "be "all things to all men, that you may win "ſome." If, in obſerving the conduct of your great Maſter, you endeavour to "ſup-

"port

" port the conſiſtence between each parti-
" cular action, and each particular ſitua-
" tion," you will diſcover, in more than theory " the conformity of all his actions
" to one common rule, the word of God;
" and their tendency to one common end,
" the ſalvation of mankind." Theſe " may
" be explored by the profound moraliſt, and
" muſt be admired by the pious believer, but
" cannot be deſcribed without a portion of
" that matchleſs ſimplicity with which
" they are recorded by the inſpired evan-
" geliſts: too plain for ornament, and too
" grand for illuſtration, the character of
" *Jeſus* leaves at a diſtance the powers of
" language."

Our attention to that beautiful ſimplicity, will bid faireſt to obtain the glorious prize contended for. If you adminiſter to ſowing the ſeeds of piety in the hearts of young pupils, you will certainly reap the richer harveſt, by the taſk of reforming thoſe whoſe reaſon is matured by time being rendered ſo much the more

eaſy. We learn by teaching: generations to come, as well as the preſent, will receive the benefits of ſuch labours. The more you exert yourſelf, the greater aid you will receive from the bountiful Giver of all good. Without any guidance from the dazzling light of the flames of enthuſiaſm, or the ſtoical apathy of modern refinements, you will proceed, by the force of perſeverance, in humble confidence of a happy event. As a faithful ſervant of our Lord, you are ſent out to work in his vineyard: It is not a queſtion whether you will obey him: You are commiſſioned *by him*; and if you do the work in the beſt manner you are able, he will reward you: your example will be followed, in the degree that the influence of the deed is extenſive.

The *clergy*, I preſume, have had their ſhare, in the ſeveral provinces of this kingdom, where the deſign has been actually carried into execution. Perhaps you may be acquainted with ſome particulars, which may

may be of uſe to us to be informed of. We have ſeen an hiſtorical narrative of what the pious Mr. *Raikes* did at Glouceſter, and how far his good ſenſe and philanthropy prevailed, in giving a current to the ſtream which, if I am rightly informed, is happily ſpread over Yorkſhire, Lancaſhire, and, as you now mention, ſeveral other counties.

No clergyman ought to think himſelf unintereſted; or, when he conſiders what he he has engaged for, be intimidated. In taking holy orders, he took up arms againſt *all the powers of darkneſs*; but in the caſe before us, what has he to contend with? The *infant-mind*, in all its native ingenuouſneſs, ſuſceptible of every good impreſſion; a temper beſt ſuited to the kingdom of righteouſneſs, as expreſsly declared by him who was a perfect maſter of the human heart? This is no object for *fear*:—You may direct, without taking the drudgery of any duty. Every good deed requires *labour*; but when you appear in your proper character,

character, and talk the language of a father and a friend, ſuited to the infant-heart: when you make your reſentments yield to the conſideration of that ignorance which you will find among the parents of ſome, and the perverſeneſs of others, it ought to be preſumed, that you will not be diſappointed of the object of your hope.

Determine, Sir, to proceed, and your work is half-done! It is at once the moſt ſimple, yet the moſt important enterprize you can undertake. If in the iſſue you ſhould want aſſiſtance, from any ſuperior in dignity, age, or fortune, to uſe the language of ſcripture, aſk and you will receive: make your requeſt reaſonable, and you will not be refuſed.

Cold as the times are generally ſuppoſed to be, in reſpect to *religion*, the ſuppoſition that no efforts without a miracle will prevail, is in effect to preach *deſpair*, — of all doctrines the moſt offenſive to the mercy of God! Many a heart is yet warm with piety; many a head is ſtrong in faith and underſtanding

derſtanding in the promiſes of God! When I ſee at a ſhop-door, *two* ſermons marked for ſale for *three*-pence, and know that they contain fine ſentiments, ſtrong inſtruction to find the way to heaven, expreſt in beautiful language, and not many years ſince delivered before the politeſt congregation, I am led to think, to our reproach indeed, that *divinity* is not our favourite ſtudy: but I am not leſs perſuaded, that we often talk of difficulties till we create them: inſtead of applying our powers to the conqueſt of ſpiritual obſtructions, we ſubdue ourſelves by the terrors created by puſillanimity, and render our object invincible. Humanly ſpeaking, there is nothing ſuperior to induſtry, which has reaſon for its guide, and religion for its companion: for though the ways of Heaven are paſt finding out, *vice*, being morally blind, generally ſtumbles, and falls. You will grant, that the phantoms of an imagination diſtempered by *indolence*, often become more formidable, than the impediments created by the real corruption

of

of the heart. We know that few things which deſerve attention, are to be accompliſhed without labour and perſeverance: the ſame man is not always in the ſame humour; and importunity is generally the condition of ſucceſs.

I have given you my thoughts of your generous and pious propoſal, and its appendant circumſtances, in an ample manner, with the freedom of a friend, profeſſing the higheſt reſpect for your *order:* I am anxious to ſee *that order* reſpected by every rank and condition, and that it may be ſupported by the means moſt productive of the common happineſs, which is interwoven with it. I am ready to give you any aſſiſtance in my poor power: I fear it cannot be of much value! — To believe that *the ſoul of man is immortal*, as a truth brought to light by the goſpel, in all the majeſty of the Son of God, and not to honour and ſupport the preachers of that goſpel, can be reconciled on no principle of reaſon or religion. To *think*, and to be *aſhamed* of

oppoſing

oppoſing ſuch a plan as you recommend, are words of the ſame meaning. —— Moſt cordially wiſhing you ſucceſs, and deſiring the pleaſure of ſeeing you under my roof, I am, with very ſincere reſpect for your profeſſion and propoſal,

SIR,

Your moſt humble

and obedient ſervant,

Red Lion Square,
7th May, 1785.

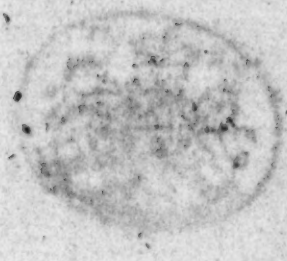
JONAS HANWAY.

POST-

POSTSCRIPT

to Letters on Chimney-Sweepers Climbing-Boys.

THOUGH I have recommended in my plan for the *incorporation* of the fraternity of Maſter Chimney-Sweepers, page 100, that the boy be not leſs than eight years old when apprenticed, and to ſerve till he is fifteen; upon maturer thought, I ſee much ſtronger reaſon why he ſhould be ten years old, and ſerve only five years. If this mode is adopted, it will be a convincing proof of our national humanity: and as the boy muſt often be placed out a ſecond time, it cannot be deemed an act of partiality,

partiality, but an act of juſtice due to this part of our fellow-ſubjects, the leaſt that ought to be ſhewn to theſe young perſons deſtined to perform an office of ſuch a perilous nature.

THE END.